CHAPTER 6

OTHER TACTICAL OPERATIONS

In the final analysis and once the force is engaged, superior combat power derives from the courage and competence of soldiers, the excellence of their training, the capability of their equipment, and above all the quality of their leadership.

FM 100-5, 1986

This chapter discusses operations requiring special planning considerations. These operations may be critical tasks that a company must accomplish to complete its mission, such as a passage of lines or a relief in place. In other situations (a raid or a delay), the mission itself may require special planning considerations.

Section I. PASSAGE OF LINES

A passage of lines is an operation in which one unit passes through the lines of another unit. When a unit moving toward the enemy passes through a stationary unit, it is a forward passage. When a unit moving away from the enemy passes through a stationary unit, it is a rearward passage.

6-1. PURPOSE

This operation is conducted when the company's mission requires a movement through terrain occupied by another unit. A company may conduct a passage of lines—

- To initiate or continue the attack.
- To begin an infiltration.
- To conduct reconnaissance operations.
- To conduct a counterattack.
- To conduct retrograde operations.

6-2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In planning for a passage of lines, the CO should consider the following to reduce the disruption of both the passing unit's movement and the stationary unit's defense.

- Conduct the passage as quickly as possible.
- Avoid masking the fires of the stationary unit.
- Coordinate early in the planning process and maintain the coordination/liaison during execution.
- Maximize the support from the stationary unit.
- Plan for likely contingencies.
- When possible, bypass the stationary unit.
- When possible, avoid passing through a unit that is in contact with the enemy.

6-3. SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Each tactical situation presents certain considerations for both the passing and the stationary company commanders. These considerations result from the commanders'

estimate of the situation. A passage of lines to begin an attack will vary from a passage of lines to begin an infiltration. The passage of lines is planned to support the company's mission.

a. **Command and Control**. Due to the mixing of units during the passage, C2 considerations for a passage of lines are unique. Coordination must begin early in the planning process. The positioning of key leaders and the proper use of control measures will also facilitate effective C2.

(1) Coordination between the passing and stationary companies may include the following:

- Exchange of intelligence.
- Exchange of tactical plans.
- The reconnaissance plan.
- Selection of passage points and provisions for guides.
- Time or event when responsibility for the control of the area of operations is transferred.
- Fire and other combat support to be provided by the company in contact.
- Exchange of information on minefields and other obstacles.
- Exchange of liaison personnel.
- Exchange of frequencies, call signs, challenge and passwords, and recognition signals.

(2) The location of the key leaders for both the passing and the stationary company is critical. The commanders and their FSOs should collocate where they can best observe and control the passage. The other key leaders (XO, 1SG) should be positioned where they can best assist the commander, possibly at the passage point or along the passage lanes.

(3) The passage of lines should be supported by the proper graphics to provide both the required control and flexibility during execution. These may be designated by the higher commander or either of the company COs. The following control measures are often used to support a passage of lines:

(a) Assembly areas. These are used more often in a rearward passage to allow the passing company to reorganize before continuing movement. These may be designated but occupied only when required.

(b) Attack position.

(c) Battle handover line. A phase line used in a rearward passage to designate the point where the stationary unit assumes responsibility for the battle is the BHO line. The stationary unit must be able to engage with direct fires out to the BHO line and assist the passing unit's disengagement, if required.

(d) Contact point. A contact point should be designated for each passage point or lane by the stationary company CO. He may plan both a primary and an alternate contact point.

(e) Passage lanes. These should pass through unoccupied terrain between positions and completely through all obstacles. There may be multiple lanes or primary and alternate ones.

(f) Passage points. These may be used instead of a passage lane when the stationary units positioning and obstacles do not require a lane. They may also be designated along a passage lane to increase control.

(g) Routes.
(h) Release points.
(i) Start points.
(j) Signals. Recognition signals to facilitate the linkup at the contact point must be determined. Considerations for identifying enemy from friendly (particularly for a rearward passage) include marking of personnel/vehicles, chemical lights, turret orientation (turrets should be pointed toward the enemy), and the use of challenges and passwords.

b. **Reconnaissance**. The passing commander ensures that a physical reconnaissance is conducted early in the planning process. If the CO is unavailable, then the XO or another leader conducts the reconnaissance and the initial coordination with the stationary company. When possible, subordinate leaders also conduct a reconnaissance of their areas of concern. Specific requirements may include reconnoitering the following locations:

- Passage points/lanes.
- Enemy positions.
- Obstacles (friendly and enemy).
- Friendly positions.
- Contact points, start points, release points, routes, and assembly areas.
- CS and CSS elements, (trains, aid stations, mortars, GSRs).

c. **Security**. Preparatory actions must not reveal an increase in activity in the vicinity of the passage area. To maintain OPSEC, limit the size of the reconnaissance party. Contact points, passage points and lanes, assembly areas, and routes should use all available cover and concealment. When possible, conduct the passage and the preparatory activities during limited visibility. The stationary unit should continue to operate as normal. Although normally planned above company level, it may be possible to use a simple deception operation to focus the enemy's attention away from the passage site.

d. **Fire Support**. The COs and FSOs must coordinate their fire support plans. The stationary company plans to support the passing company with direct and indirect fires; the FSOs exchange target lists. If a transfer of responsibility for the area forward of the stationary company is not required, such as during an infiltration, then additional fire control measures may be required to prevent fratricide. Both direct and indirect fires must be addressed, and these control measures must be disseminated to all units involved.

e. **Combat Service Support**. The stationary company should provide CSS to the passing company. This normally includes evacuating casualties, handling EPWs, recovering and evacuating vehicles, and resupplying fuel and ammunition.

f. **Guides**. The stationary company must provide guides to link up with the passing company at the contact points. These guides remain with the passing company throughout the stationary company's area of operations. The passing CO provides the guide with the number of personnel and vehicles of each separate unit passing through each passage point. The guide counts them as they pass to ensure they all pass through and that no enemy has infiltrated their formations.

6-4. CONDUCT OF THE FORWARD PASSAGE

At the scheduled time, the passing company approaches the contact point(s) and

exchanges the recognition signals with the guide (s). Figure 6-1 depicts a forward passage of lines. The guide then leads the passing unit through the stationary company's positions along the coordinated routes or passage lanes. At the passage point or at the beginning of the passage lane, a representative of the stationary company counts the passing unit through. The passing unit moves through quickly without stopping. The COs and their FSOs collocate where they can observe critical areas, make timely decisions, and issue instructions. The guides release the passing units at the release point of a route or the end of the passage lane.

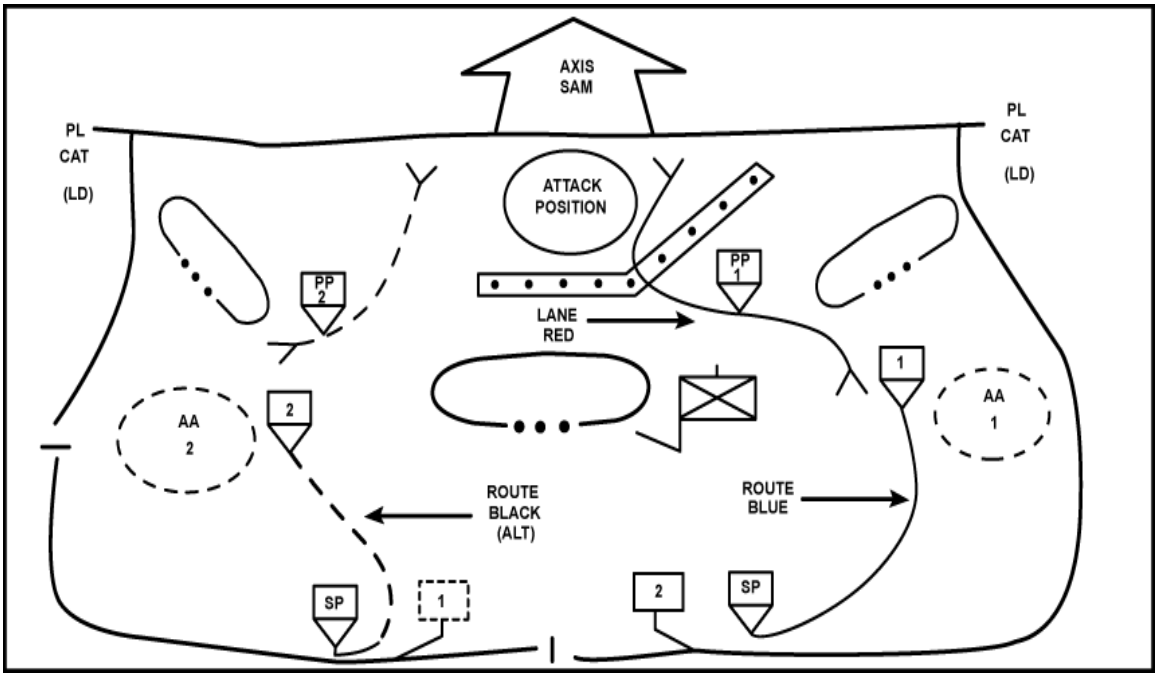

Figure 6-1. Forward passage of lines.

6-5. CONDUCT OF A REARWARD PASSAGE

The fundamentals of a rearward passage are the same as the forward passage. A rearward passage may include a battle handover. To conduct battle handover, the stationary unit positions weapons and units where they can engage enemy forces out to the BHO line. As the passing unit soldiers approach the BHO line, they attempt to disengage from the enemy and move along their assigned passage routes or lanes. The stationary unit assists their disengagement with direct and indirect fires. A rearward passage under these conditions may get very confusing. Friendly and enemy units may be intermixed, or the enemy may actually arrive first. To reduce this confusion, the company COs should collocate. Figure 6-2 depicts a rearward passage of lines.

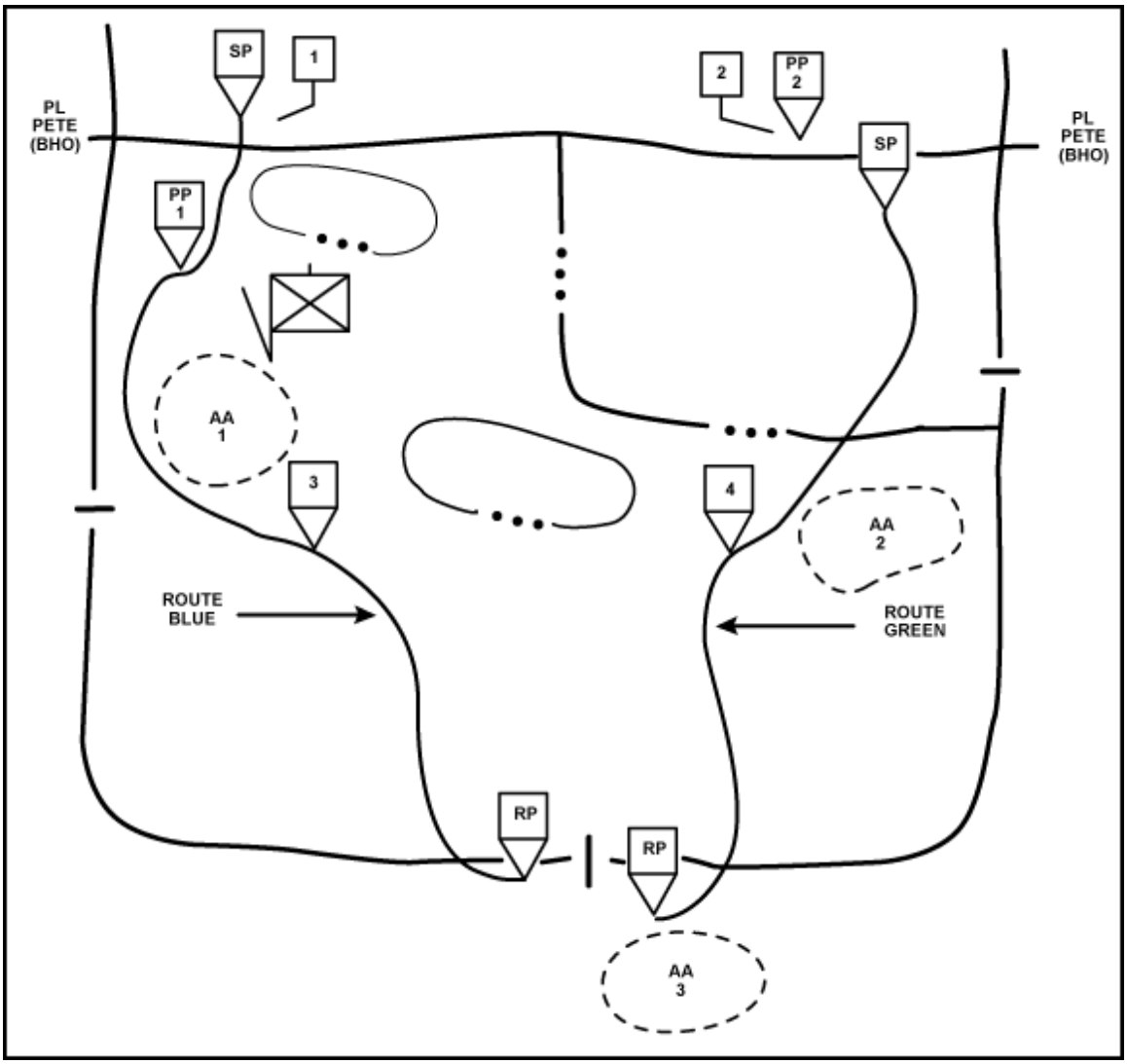

Figure 6-2. Rearward passage of lines.

Section II. RELIEF IN PLACE

A relief in place is an operation in which one unit replaces another unit and assumes the relieved unit's responsibilities.

6-6. PURPOSE

The primary purpose for a relief in place operation is to maintain the combat effectiveness of committed units. A relief in place may also be conducted—

- To reorganize, reconstitute, or re–equip a unit that has sustained heavy losses.
- To rest units that have conducted sustained operations.
- To establish the security force or the DLIC during a withdrawal operation. (In this case, there are additional requirements addressed in Section III, Retrograde Operations.)
- To allow the relieved unit to conduct another operation.

6-7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

If the time and location of the coordination meeting was not directed, the relieving unit CO must contact the relieved unit CO to coordinate these specifics. The COs, XOs, platoon leaders, and FSOs should attend the meeting.

a. **Mission Specific**. Each tactical situation presents unique considerations for both the relieving and the relieved commanders. The missions for each company, the enemy situation, and the amount of time available are a few of the specifics that will impact on the plan.

b. **Command and Control**. The C2 requirements during a relief are unique because of the mixing of units. To ensure effective C2, detailed coordination must occur early in the planning process. The positioning of key leaders and use of effective control measures will also ensure effective C2.

(1) Coordination between the relieving and the relieved units may include—

- Exchange of intelligence.
- Arrangements for reconnaissance.
- Exchange of tactical plans and sector sketches.
- Sequence and timing for each subunit's relief.
- Time or circumstance when the responsibility for the relieved unit's area of operations is transferred.
- The use of guides and liaison personnel.
- Security measures.
- Fire support.
- Transfer and exchange of equipment, supplies, ammunition, and minefields.
- Control measures.
- Exchange of frequencies, call signs, challenge and passwords, and recognition signals.

(2) The locations of the key leaders for both units are critical. The COs and their FSOs normally collocate at a location where they can best observe and control the relief. Other key leaders should be positioned where they can assist the commander. These may include areas along routes, assembly areas, points of possible congestion, or locations of greatest enemy threat.

(3) The relief in place should be supported by control measures to provide control and flexibility during execution. The specific method of relief will determine the number and type of control measures required. The following control measures are routine:

(a) Assembly areas. The relieved unit may designate platoon and company AAs to the rear of their positions. The relieving unit may also designate AAs, but they should move directly into position. To avoid confusion, separate AAs must be identified for each unit.

(b) Contact points. Contact points are normally designated by the relieved company commander to facilitate the initial linkup between the companies. Multiple contact points may be required to support certain relief operations.

(c) Release points. The relieved CO normally designates the platoon release point for the relieving company. When required, squad release points may be designated by the relieved company commander or platoon leader.

(d) Routes. All units should move along designated routes to avoid confusion and fratricide. When possible, separate routes for both the relieving and the relieved units

should be designated. It is the responsibility of the relieved CO to ensure that all movements are controlled.

c. **Reconnaissance.** The relieving CO conducts a physical reconnaissance as soon as possible. The commanders and leaders of both companies should reconnoiter together to ensure coordination of movement plans. It is critical that leaders down to squad level reconnoiter to ensure full understanding of movements, control measures, and responsibilities. Specific reconnaissance requirements may include—

(1) The relieved unit's disposition (to include locations of all OPs, minefields, land lines, PEWS, and crew-served weapons).

(2) Enemy dispositions when the relieved unit is in contact.

(3) Locations for AAs, release points, contact points, and routes.

(4) Locations of the CP, trains, mortars, TOWs and tanks.

d. **Method of Relief.** The method of relief is determined by the specific situation; however, regardless of the method of relief, the following actions normally occur. The relieving company occupies an AA to the rear of the relieved company or is guided along a route directly to the platoon release point. Guides are provided by the relieved unit for each relieving subordinate unit. The company CPs collocate prior to commencing the relief. The relief begins with the depth positions of the relieved company. The relieving company's trains and mortars will normally be positioned before any relief begins. The relieved company's trains and mortars, will normally remain in position until responsibility for the area has passed to the relieving company. The methods for conducting the relief are as follows:

(1) *Relieving one unit at a time*. This method takes longer; however, it may be required when covered and concealed routes are limited and all platoons must use the same route. The relieving company occupies an AA to the rear of the relieved company and relieves by platoon according to the coordinated sequence of relief (Figure 6-3). Each platoon moves forward (with guides provided by the relieved unit) to the squad release point. The squads are led to a covered and concealed location to the rear of the relieved squad's position, the necessary equipment is exchanged, and members of the relieving squads relieve the soldiers from the relieved squad. The relieved squad moves directly to the platoon AA, links up with the remainder of their platoon, and continues to the company AA. Once the entire relieving platoon assumes responsibility from the relieved platoon, the next platoon begins their relief.

(2) *Relieving units simultaneously*. Although this method is the fastest, enemy detection is more likely since all units move at once. This method may be appropriate when–the mission requires a rapid relief, enemy detection is not likely, and the terrain provides multiple covered and concealed routes. All relieving platoons move forward at the same time along their designated routes to the squad release points. The squad's actions are the same as in the preceding paragraph.

(3) *Relieving by occupying in-depth or adjacent positions.* This method requires the relieving unit to occupy positions to the flank or rear of the relieved unit. The relieving unit should be able to cover the relieved unit's direct–fire control measures (TRPs and EAs). This method is useful when the relieved unit is chemically or nuclear contaminated. It may also be appropriate when the units involved do not have similar TOEs, such as a light unit relieving a heavy unit. The relieving unit may occupy its

positions one at a time or all at the same time, depending on the situation. Once the relieving unit is in position, the relieved unit withdraws along designated routes.

e. **Sequence of Relief.** To determine the most effective sequence of relief, consider the following:

(1) *The combat effectiveness of the units*. If one subordinate unit has suffered heavy losses in men or equipment, it may need to be the first relieved.

(2) *The terrain*. The subordinate unit most likely to be detected during the relief should be relieved last. This allows the most relieving units to be in position before the enemy is aware of the relief operation.

(3) *The enemy*. The subordinate unit that is positioned on the most likely or most dangerous avenue of approach, should be considered for early relief.

(4) *Control.* When two adjacent units must use the same route to conduct the relief, select a method and sequence of relief that reduces congestion and confusion. Avoid massing units in a small area.

(5) *Subsequent mission*. The subordinate unit with the most critical task may need to be relieved first. For example, a relieving subordinate unit may need to establish an OP forward of their position to provide security for the rest of the relief operation. Or when the company being relieved is moving to a LZ for an air assault operation, the platoon tasked to secure the LZ should be relieved first.

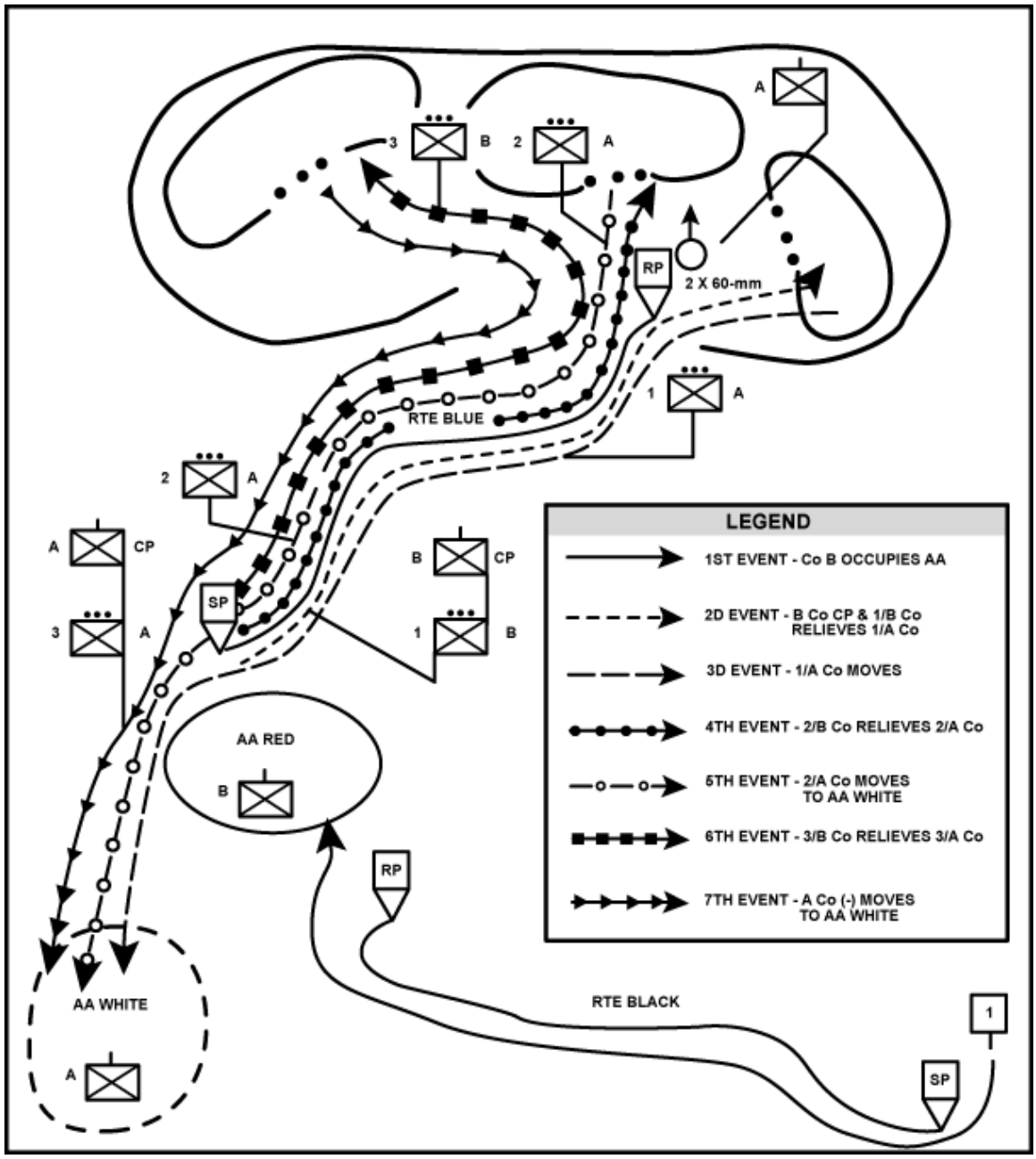

Figure 6-3. Concept sketch for relief in sequence.

f. **Transfer of Responsibility**. The time for the transfer of responsibility must be agreed to by both commanders. Normally, this occurs once two-thirds of the relieving company are in position and have established communications and control.

g. **Transfer/Exchange of Equipment and Supplies**. To simplify the relief and maintain the OPSEC, certain equipment and supplies may need to be transferred between the two units. These include machine gun tripods, mortar baseplates and aiming stakes, camouflage nets, M8 alarms, and PEWS. Supplies that may need to be transferred include barrier materials; excess or stockpiled supplies and ammunition; and bulky or heavy supplies, which would slow the relief if the relieved unit attempted to carry them out. The

prepared range cards, sector sketches, and minefield records must also be transferred to the relieving unit.

h. **Operations Security and Deception**. Every effort must be made to keep the enemy from knowing the relief is taking place. The relief should be conducted during limited visibility.

(1) The dispositions, activities, and radio traffic of the relieved unit must be maintained throughout the relief.

(2) Both companies should be on the relieved company's net. The relieved company maintains routine traffic while the relieving company monitors. Once the relief is complete and on a prearranged signal, the relieving company changes to their assigned frequency.

(3) Security activities (OPs and patrols) must maintain the established schedule. This may require some personnel from the relieving unit being placed under OPCON of the relieved unit before the relief.

(4) Additional planning and coordinating is required when a relief is conducted between a mechanized unit and an infantry company, and relief by the depth or adjacent position method is not possible. If the relieving company is a mechanized unit, the company should dismount, conduct the relief with the dismounts, and position the vehicles once the relieved company has withdrawn. If the relieved company is a mechanized unit, the relieving company should relieve the dismounts, and then the vehicles move to the rear. The dismounts from the relieved unit may mount their vehicles or move to the rear on foot and occupy AAs until they linkup with their vehicles. If possible, the relieved company uses routine vehicle movements to reposition some vehicles to the rear before the relief. This may be possible when the unit has been using the out–of–position resupply technique. All vehicles would move to the resupply point, but only half return to their positions.

i. **Contingency Plan**. The COs should collocate where they can best observe and control the relief. The conduct of the relief is under the control of the relieved company commander until the conditions for the transfer of responsibility are met. If the enemy attacks before the transfer of responsibility, the subordinate units of the relieving company, which are in the area, become OPCON to the relieved company commander. If the enemy attacks after the transfer, the relieving commander assumes operational control of all units of the relieved company still in the area. Plans should be developed to cover these contingencies. A clear understanding of when units would become OPCON must be agreed upon. These contingency plans should address how the uncommitted OPCON units will be employed. A technique that provides flexibility to the relief plan is to designate the last relieving unit as the reserve.

6-8. CONDUCT OF THE RELIEF

At the time set for the start of the relief, the relieving company moves to the contact point and makes contact with the company guide from the relieved company (Figure 6-4). The guide leads the company to the RP where it links up with the platoon and section guides. The platoon guides lead the platoons to their respective RPs where the squad guides link up with their squads.

a. In the sequence specified in the order, each platoon conducts its relief. The platoon leader releases control of his squads, and the squad guides lead the squads to a

location just to the rear of their defensive positions. The squad leaders then begin relieving a few men at a time until the relief is complete. Before each relieved soldier or leader leaves his position, he orients the relieving soldier or leader on the position and the area around it.

b. As each soldier or leader is relieved, he moves to his squad's AA. When each squad is assembled, it moves to its platoon's AA. When each platoon is assembled and its leader is relieved of his responsibility for the defense, it moves to the company AA. After the company is assembled and the transfer of responsibility is complete, the relieved CO moves his company as directed by the battalion commander.

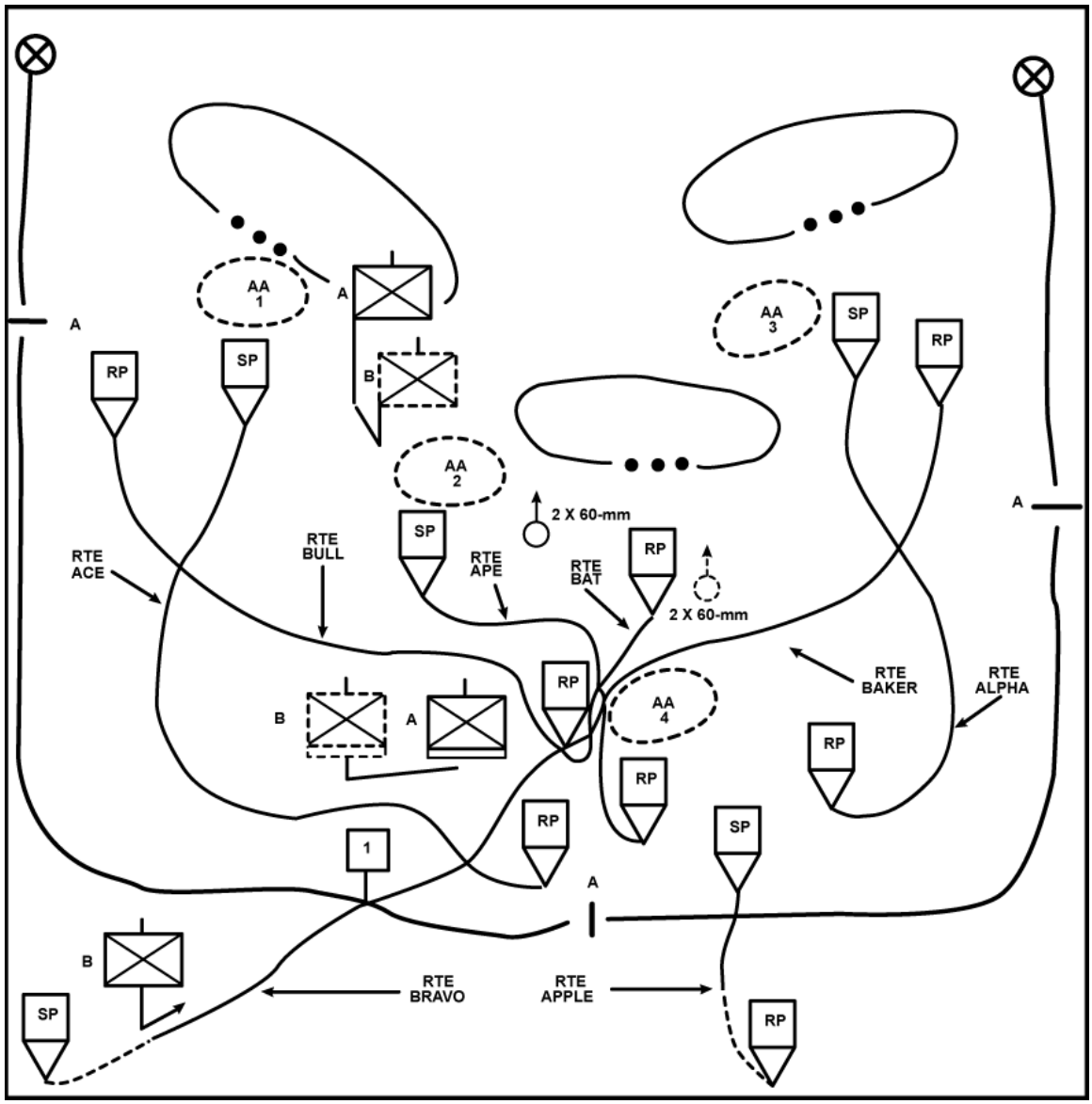

Figure 6-4. Relief in place (company graphics).

Section III. RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

A retrograde operation is an organized movement away from the enemy. It may be forced or voluntary; but, in either case, the higher commander approves the rearward movement.

These operations (delays, withdrawals, and retirements) are conducted to harass, exhaust, disrupt, delay, or damage the enemy. Such operations gain time, avoid combat under unfavorable conditions, or draw the enemy into an unfavorable position. They are also used to reposition forces, to shorten lines of communications, or to permit the use of a force elsewhere. All retrograde operations are difficult; delays and withdrawals are also inherently risky. To succeed, they must be well organized and well executed.

6-9. DELAYS

The intent of a delay is to slow the enemy, cause enemy casualties, and stop him (where possible) without becoming decisively engaged. This is done by defending, disengaging, moving, and defending again. The company may also delay to draw the enemy into a vulnerable position. Delaying units are expected to aggressively fight within the framework of the higher commander's concept. This often means conducting counterattacks/spoiling attacks whenever possible. Companies do not conduct delays independently, they fight as part of their battalion. The company may delay in sector or from battle positions.

a. A delay against a mounted force is a difficult operation. The company may easily become decisively engaged, and it runs the risk of being destroyed or surrounded. The company must reduce the enemy's mobility advantage with obstacles, fires, and the effective use of the terrain. The battalion commander should give the CO clear instructions on the criteria for disengagement and when decisive engagement may be required.

b. The battalion commander normally assigns the company a sector when there is no dominating terrain on the enemy avenues of approach, where there are multiple enemy avenues of approach, or when the battalion sector is extremely wide. He may also assign one or more phase lines, which the company must prevent the enemy from crossing until a certain time.

c. The company commander may assign sectors or initial and subsequent delay positions for his platoons (Figure 6-5). He defends and withdraws by platoons, bounding them to the rear.

d. Delay positions must have the same characteristics as good defensive battle positions. They should have effective fields of fire to the front and covered withdrawal routes to the rear. If good routes are not available, plan for smoke to screen the withdrawal.

e. The battalion commander normally assigns the company a series of battle positions when one of the following two situations occur. The battalion is delaying in restrictive terrain where the enemy can be canalized into selected areas. There is terrain that dominates the avenues of approach, or the battalion sector is narrow.

f. When the battalion commander assigns the company a series of battle positions from which to delay (Figure 6-6), the company moves from one battle position to another as directed by him. If it coincides with the battalion plan, the CO may pick platoon battle positions and fight a delay action between assigned company battle positions. The CO must decide which positions require preparation and allocate time and resources to them.

g. If a delay is conducted over a long distance, both methods may be used. No matter which one is used, the CO picks the platoon positions and the routes to them. If

there is terrain that is defendable forward of a phase line (set by the battalion commander), the CO may decide to defend there for the required time stated for that line.

h. In both type delays, the CO supplements the company's fire by supporting fire, smoke, minefields, and obstacles.

i. In both a delay in sector and a delay from battle positions, the CO sends a quartering party to reconnoiter routes and positions. The party may mark the routes and battle positions, and select positions for machine guns, Dragons, TOWs, and mortars. It may also guide the arriving units into their positions and pre-position supplies, water, and ammunition at each position. They may also coordinate with any units to the rear of the company when a passage of lines is required. If the company has thoroughly reconnoitered and rehearsed the delay, the quartering party may not be required.

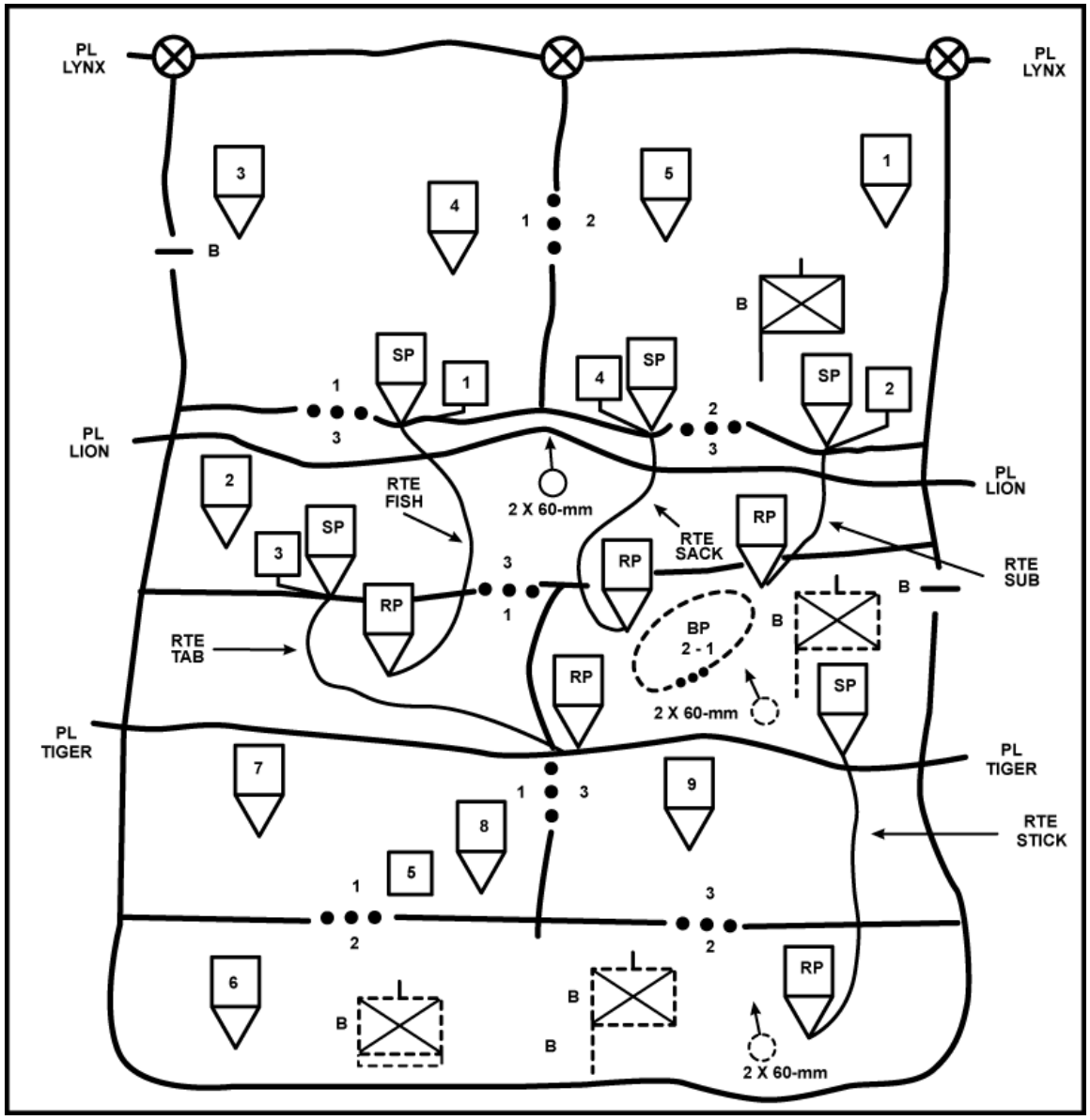

Figure 6-5. Delay in sector.

j. The battalion commander has greater control of the delay when delaying from battle positions. The CO has more control of the delay when delaying in sector. However, the battalion commander can impose more control on the company's rearward movement by assigning phase lines and times for these lines.

k. If all means of communicating with the battalion are lost, the CO may withdraw on his own if he has delayed for the required time or if his withdrawal will not endanger the mission. He must inform the battalion commander of the action he has taken. If a platoon leader loses communications with the company, he does the same. At times, decisive engagement may be required to meet the time requirement.

l. The CO and the platoon leaders should reconnoiter positions and routes before the delay begins. Plans and rehearsals are as detailed as time permits.

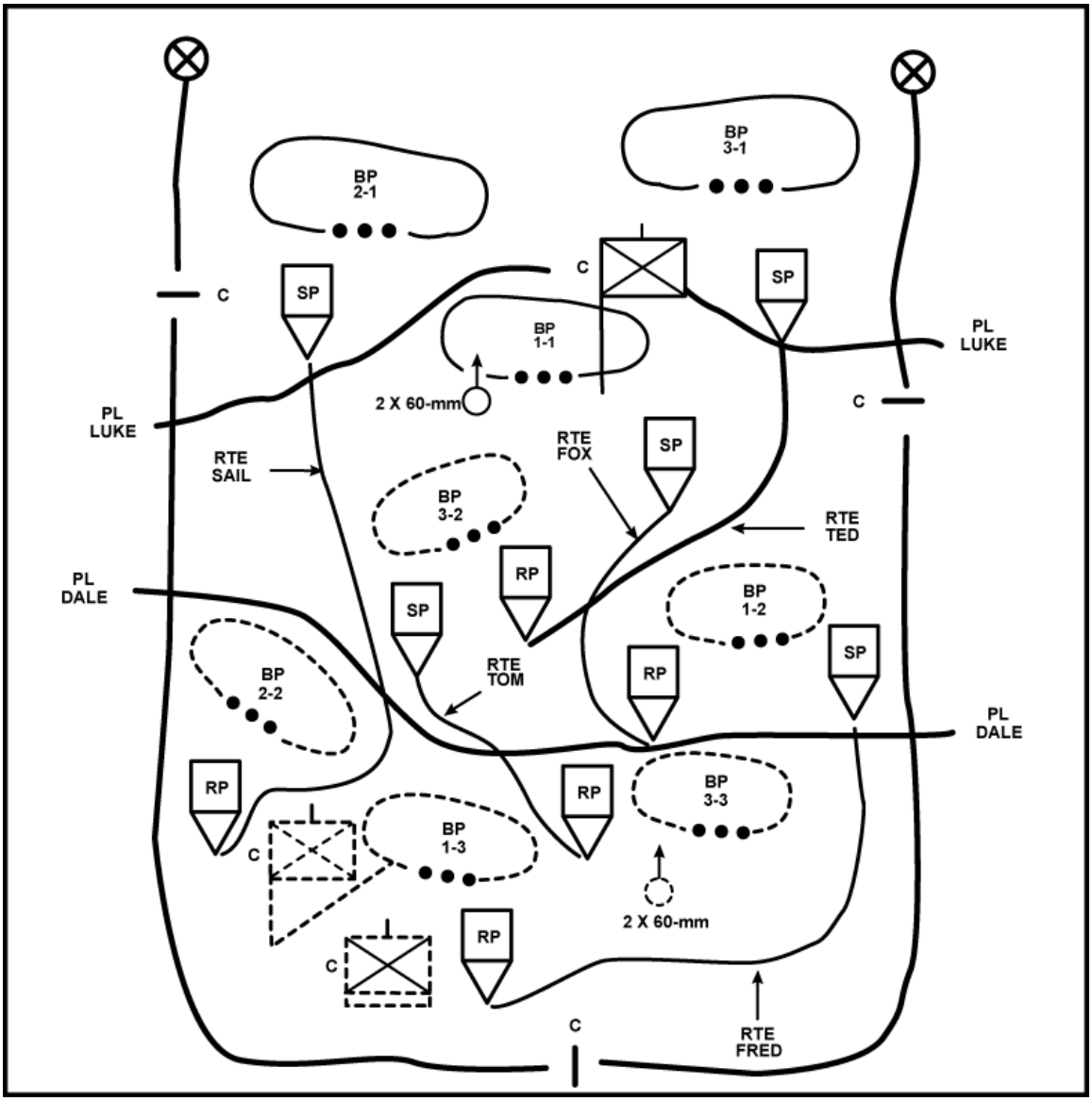

Figure 6-6. Delay from battle positions.

m. The battalion commander normally gives the company commanders a complete 5-paragraph OPORD that includes:

(1) The battalion task organization, mission, and concept.

(2) The company mission. In a decentralized battalion concept, this may be a delay task that allows the company commander maximum flexibility in conducting the mission. In other cases, the company should receive more specific tasks such as:

- Block enemy movement south for 1 hour.
- Destroy enemy in EA FIRE.
- Disrupt enemy forces on avenue of approach 2A.

(3) Their initial delay positions.

(4) His plan for controlling the engagements, disengagements, and movements.

(5) Either a sector or battle positions.

(6) The locations of the company AAs (if used).

(7) General routes to follow from position to position (when delaying from battle positions).

(8) Instructions about the quartering party (if used).

(9) Any special instructions concerning the control of the TOWs and mortars, and the movement of the company vehicles.

(10) Priorities for efforts of the supporting engineers.

n. The company commander normally gives the platoon leaders a complete 5-paragraph OPORD that includes:

(1) The platoon missions. Normally, not a delay task. The CO should develop a concept that clearly states the platoon missions.

(2) Their initial battle positions to defend.

(3) His plan for controlling the engagements, the sequence and criteria for disengagement, and the movement instructions.

(4) Subsequent positions to the rear.

(5) General routes to follow from position to position.

(6) Instructions about the company quartering party (if used).

(7) Any special instructions concerning the control of the TOWs and mortars.

(8) Instructions on the movement of supplies, equipment, and vehicles.

(9) Priorities for efforts of the supporting engineers.

6-10. WITHDRAWALS

In a withdrawal, the company disengages from the enemy and repositions for some other mission. That mission may be to delay the enemy, to defend another position, or to attack some place else. There are two types of withdrawals: not under pressure and under pressure. In a withdrawal not under pressure, the company disengages and moves to its rear while the enemy is not attacking. The company must be ready to fight its way to the rear or to resume the defense should the enemy attack. In a withdrawal under pressure, the company disengages and moves to its rear while in contact with the enemy. The enemy contact may be anything from a major attack to small patrol actions.

a. **Withdrawal Not Under Pressure**. A withdrawal not under pressure is conducted with secrecy and deception. It is best done at night or during other limited visibility (fog, snow, rain, or smoke). Usually, all platoons move to the rear at the same time. However, the company leaves a force called the detachment left in contact, which is part of the

battalion DLIC, to cover the withdrawal by deception and maneuver, when required (Figure 6-7).

(1) The size, composition, and mission of the battalion DLIC are directed by the battalion commander. He also designates the battalion DLIC commander, who is normally the battalion XO, the HHC commander, or one of the rifle company commanders.

(2) The battalion commander may decide to leave one company as the battalion DLIC or have each company leave a company DLIC. The three company DLICs make up the battalion DLIC.

(3) The size, composition, and mission of the company DLIC are directed by the company commander. He also designates the DLIC commander, who is normally the company XO or a platoon leader.

(4) If the company is selected as the battalion DLIC, the CO must reposition platoons and weapons to cover the battalion's withdrawal (Figure 6-8). This normally includes repositioning a platoon in each of the other company positions (relief in place) to cover the most dangerous avenues of approach into those positions, and repositioning weapons to cover the most dangerous avenues of approach into the battalion's sector. As a rule, the DLIC company is reinforced by about half of the battalion's TOWs, mortars, Stingers, tanks, and GSRs.

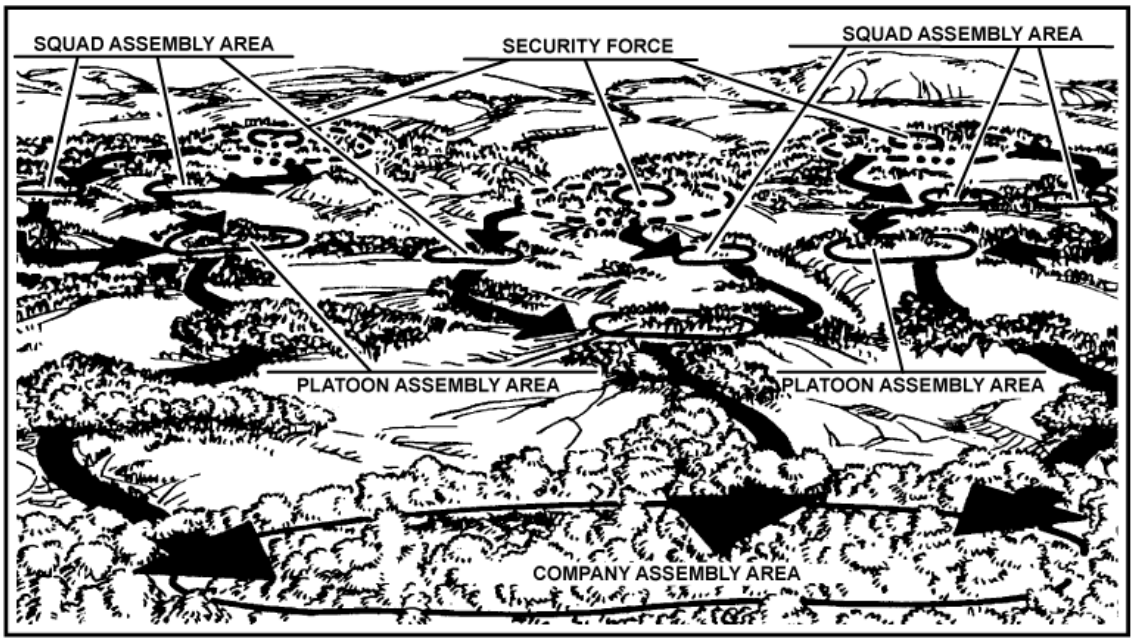

Figure 6-7. Withdrawal not under pressure.

Figure 6-8. Repositioning units.

(5) If the company is directed to have a company DLIC, it normally consists of one–third of the company's rifle strength (one platoon) and half of the company's crew–served weapons. The CO may, however, have each platoon leave a platoon DLIC. The three platoon DLICs make up the company DLIC.

(6) If a platoon is selected as the company DLIC, the platoon leader repositions squads and weapons to cover the company's withdrawal. This normally includes repositioning a squad in each of the other platoon positions to cover the most dangerous avenue of approach into that position, and repositioning weapons to cover the most dangerous avenues of approach into the company's position.

(7) If each platoon is to have a DLIC (part of the company DLIC), each platoon leader leaves one-third of his rifle strength (one squad) and half of his key weapons (one machine gun and one Dragon). The platoon DLIC leader is normally the squad leader of the squad left in position. When the withdrawal starts, each platoon DLIC comes under the control of the company DLIC commander. The withdrawing units use the same techniques and control measures as the relieved units in a relief in place.

(8) The DLIC, whether the battalion's or the company's, strives to conceal the withdrawal and deceive the enemy by continuing the normal operating patterns of the unit. If the enemy attacks during the withdrawal, the DLIC covers the main body's withdrawal by fire. Once the main body is at its next position or a designated distance or time from the old position, the DLIC commander orders the withdrawal of the DLIC. These orders should be given by telephone or radio. The DLIC withdraws using the same basic plan as the main body used. If under attack, the DLIC may have to delay to the rear until it can disengage, and then withdraw to the rear. The company mortars may be part of the DLIC. Part of their ammunition may be carried by the main body.

(9) The battalion commander may send a quartering party to the next position before the withdrawal starts. This party is normally made up of the battalion headquarter's personnel and representatives from each company (company quartering parties). Company representatives (under the control of the company XO) are usually the 1SG, company headquarters personnel, platoon sergeants, and a guide from each squad.

(10) When the company's quartering party reaches the next position, its members reconnoiter and, as appropriate, pick positions, sectors, routes, and OPs for the company.

When the company arrives, the squad guides meet and guide their squads into position. The platoon sergeants meet and brief the platoon leaders on the positions and any other important information. The 1SG meets and briefs the CO.

(11) The battalion commander normally tells the company commanders—

- When the withdrawal will start.
- Where the battalion AA is (if used), and what each company is to do on arrival in it.
- Where each company AA is.
- What routes to take from the company AAs to the battalion AA or the next position.
- The size, composition, mission, and the commander of the battalion DLIC.
- Upcoming battalion and company missions.
- When to move company vehicles to the rear.
- Any special instructions on the control of TOWs and mortars and the use of radio nets for deception.

(12) Based on the information received from the battalion commander, the CO plans for and tells the platoon leaders, the XO, and the first sergeant—

- When and where the withdrawal will start.
- Where the company AA is, and what each platoon is to do upon arrival in it.
- Where each platoon AA is.
- What routes to take from the platoon AAs to the company AA.
- The size, composition, mission, and commander of the company DLIC.
- The withdrawal and linkup plan for the DLIC.
- Upcoming company and platoon missions.
- When to move company vehicles to the rear.
- Any special instructions.

(13) If the company DLIC is to occupy the OPs and the positions of other companies, the COs concerned coordinate the time and the sequence of the relief. The relief must occur at the designated time and before the companies withdraw.

(14) The DLIC FSO (one of the company FSOs) obtains the consolidated battalion fire plan and coordinates all indirect fire for the DLIC. In some cases, however, the battalion FSO may remain with the DLIC.

(15) Before the withdrawal starts, all company vehicles and or equipment not needed for the withdrawal are moved to the rear. They may be moved to the next position or to an AA where they will link up with the company. The mortars are also moved where they can support the withdrawal. Several positions may be assigned to the mortars along the withdrawal route to allow continuous coverage.

(16) At the time specified in the battalion order, the withdrawal begins. Soldiers move from their fighting positions to their squad's AA, and the squads then move to their platoon's AA. The platoons then move to the company AA. When all personnel and equipment are accounted for, the company moves as directed by the battalion commander. The complete move is characterized by stealth and secrecy.

(17) When the battalion's main body is at a designated location, after a designated length of time, or on command from the battalion commander, the DLIC withdraws. It follows the same basic plan that the main body used.

b. **Withdrawal Under Pressure.** A withdrawal under pressure is conducted when a company under enemy pressure is directed to withdraw from its sector or is forced from its defensive positions by the enemy (Figure 6-9). The company may move to another position to continue the defense or to disengage and move elsewhere for another mission. Each company tries to disengage from the enemy by maneuver to the rear. Once a company has disengaged and moved to the rear of its original position, the battalion commander may direct what it is to do next. This may include covering the rearward movement of other companies, occupying a new defensive position, or moving to perform another mission.

(1) There is usually no time to make detailed plans or to rehearse a withdrawal under pressure. The commander plans quickly and gives FRAGOs.

(2) The CO controls the sequence in which the platoons withdraw. His decision is usually based on where the enemy attacks and how heavily each platoon is engaged. Once the battalion commander directs the company to withdraw, the CO normally withdraws his least heavily engaged platoon first. He usually directs that platoon to disengage and move into a position where it can overwatch the disengagement of the more heavily engaged platoons. The platoons then change roles and bound to the rear, using maneuver.

(3) At some point in this action, the company stops maneuvering and begins bounding overwatch (to the rear). This occurs when the company is no longer under enemy direct fire, or when another company is covering its move. Once the company has disengaged, it moves as directed by the battalion commander.

(4) If the withdrawing company is to make a passage of lines through a friendly unit to its rear, the CO sends a quartering party to coordinate with that unit. The quartering party should arrange recognition signals, communications, the battle handover, contact points, passage points, passage lanes, AAs, guides, traffic control, fire support, and CSS prior to the rearward passage (Section I, Chapter 6).

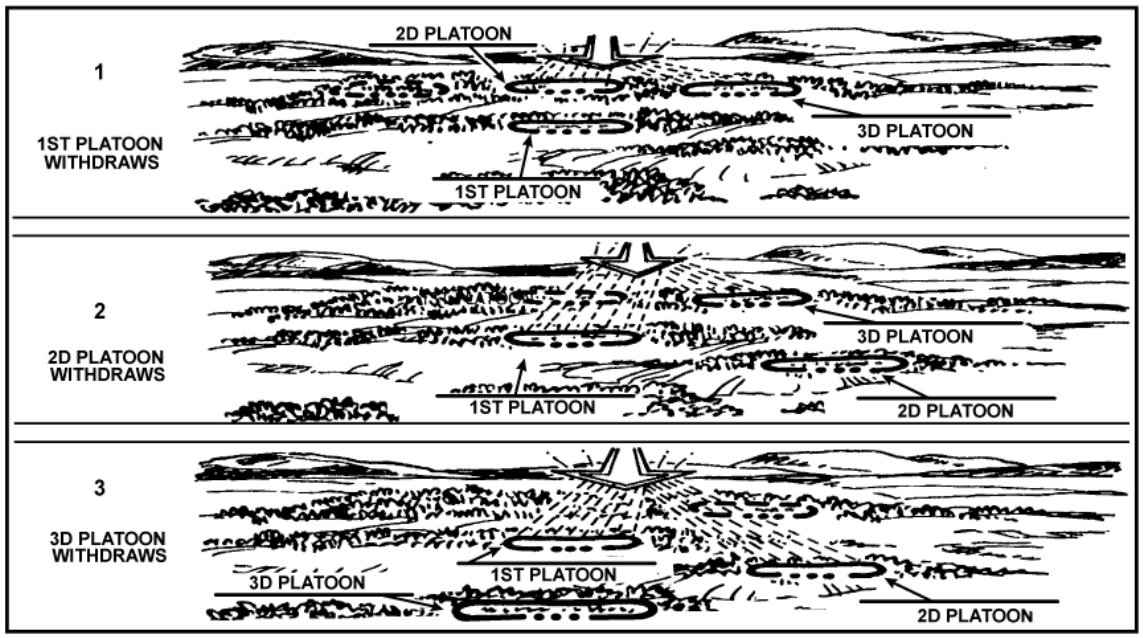

Figure 6-9. Withdrawal under pressure.

6-11. RETIREMENTS

A retirement is a retrograde operation in which a force that is not engaged with the enemy moves to the rear in an organized manner. Companies perform retirements as part of larger units. They use tactical movement techniques, foot marches, and vehicular road marches. Retirements may follow withdrawals or they may begin before contact with the enemy.

Section IV. LINKUPS

Linkups normally occur in enemy controlled areas. They depend on control, detailed planning, coordination, and stealth.

6-12. PLANNING

The plans for a linkup must be detailed; they must cover the following items:

a. **Site Selection**. Identify both a primary and an alternate site. They should be easy to find at night, have cover and concealment, and be off the natural lines of drift. They must also be easy to defend for a short time and offer access and escape routes.

b. **Recognition Signals**. Far and near signals are needed to keep friendly units from firing on each other. Although the units conducting the linkup exchange radio frequencies and call signs, the radio should be avoided as a means of recognition due to the threat of compromise. Visual and voice recognition signals are to be planned.

(1) One is a sign and countersign exchanged between units. This can be a challenge and password or a number combination for a near signal. It could also be an exchange of signals using flashlights, chemical lights, infrared lights, or VS–17 panels for far recognition signals.

(2) There also are signals that are placed on the linkup site. Examples are stones placed in a prearranged pattern, markings on trees, and arrangements of wood or tree limbs. These mark the exact location of the linkup. The first unit to the linkup site places

the sign and positions the contact team to watch it. The next unit to the site then stops at the signal and initiates the far recognition signal.

c. **Fires.** Indirect fires are always planned. They support the movement by masking noise, deceiving the enemy of friendly intent, and distracting the enemy. Plan indirect fires along the infiltration lanes and at the linkup sites to support if chance contact is made. Restrictive fire lines or areas control fires around the linkup site. Phase lines may serve as RFLs; they are adjusted as two forces approach each other.

d. **Contingency Plans**. The unit SOP or the linkup annex to the OPORD must cover the following contingencies:

- Enemy contact before linkup.
- Enemy contact during linkup.
- Enemy contact after linkup.
- How long to wait at the linkup site.
- What to do if some elements do not make it to the linkup.
- Alternate linkup points and rally points.

6-13. CONDUCT OF THE LINKUP

In a linkup, the procedure begins as the unit moves to the linkup point. If the radio is used, the unit reports its location using phase lines, checkpoints, or other control measures. Each unit picks a small contact team to go to the linkup point; the remainder of the unit stays in the linkup rally point. The leader fixes individual duties of the contact team and coordinates procedures for integrating the linkup units into a single linkup rally point. Full rehearsals are conducted if time permits. Figure 6-10 depicts a company linkup between the 3d Platoon, which infiltrated early, conducted the reconnaissance of the objective, and established the ORP, and the rest of the company, which infiltrated later.

a. The unit stops and sets up a linkup rally point about 300 meters away from the linkup point. A contact team is sent to the linkup point; it pinpoints the point and observes the area. If the unit is the first at the site, it clears the immediate area and marks the linkup point, using the agreed-upon recognition signal. It then takes up a covered and concealed position to watch the linkup point.

b. The next unit approaching the site repeats the steps above. When its contact team arrives at the site and spots the recognition signal, they then initiate the far recognition signal, which is answered by the first team, and they exchange near recognition signals.

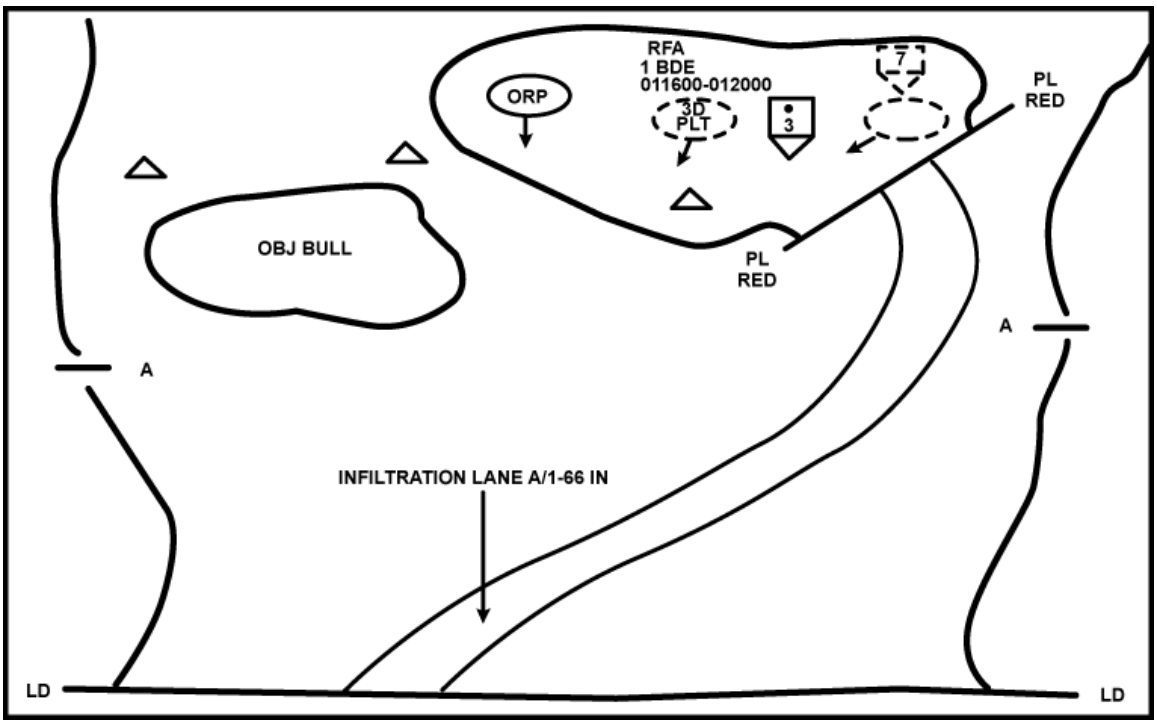

Figure 6-10. Company linkup graphics.

c. The contact teams coordinate the actions required to link up the units, such as to move one unit to the other unit's rally point, or to continue the mission.

Section V. WATER CROSSING

The company may be required to cross water obstacles, ranging from small streams to major rivers. Commanders cannot lose the initiative by letting the water obstacle delay them; they must cross it as quickly as possible. A thorough reconnaissance by map, air, or ground is the key to this operation. If the water obstacle is significant (due to depth or speed of current), the rifle company must carry the necessary special equipment, or it will not be able to accomplish its mission. Limited visibility offers the most secure conditions for all water crossing operations.

6-14. WITH OPPOSITION

A crossing may be conducted against enemy opposition. In this case, the crossing sites are selected to avoid the enemy's fires. The company uses the same procedure for breaching any obstacle. The plan must include suppressing the enemy, obscuring the enemy, securing a foothold on the far side of the obstacle, and reducing the obstacle to allow the company through. The enemy's positions and weapons that can engage the crossing force must be suppressed. If the crossing is made under fire, the CO must use preplanned indirect fires and smoke to suppress the enemy and obscure his observation of the crossing site. If smoke is used, deception smoke should be fired at other likely crossing sites too. Small boats (RB–3, RB–15, zodiac), 120–foot climbing ropes, or poncho rafts can be used for crossing water obstacles that are not fordable by unaided infantrymen. The security techniques and planning considerations are the same. A rifle company would normally conduct a crossing under fire as part of a larger force.

6-15. WITHOUT OPPOSITION

During an unopposed crossing, an element from the company will cross and secure the far side. Preplanned suppressive fires are used only if enemy resistance is encountered. The bridge team (if a rope crossing is made) must be well rehearsed. FM 90-5 discusses rope bridge construction.

a. The company XO or another designated leader should be assigned duties as crossing site commander. He is responsible for the physical operation of the crossing site. He determines the water obstacle conditions, which include the following:

- Width and depth of the obstacle.
- Current velocity.
- Bank conditions and landing points.
- Enemy situation surrounding the planned crossing.

b. The following must be planned and coordinated:

- Communications.
- Security on the near and far side of the crossing site.
- Ground guides familiar with the crossing site.
- Assembly areas on both sides.
- Overwatch positions to protect the crossing site.
- Emergency signals in case the crossing must be aborted.
- Navigational aids between landing points (if boats are used).
- Control measures as appropriate (contact points, phase lines, rally points, and so forth).

c. Safety considerations should include posting lifeguards, identifying weak/nonswimmers, and inspecting the bridge and safety lines.

Section VI. PATROLLING

A patrol is a detachment sent out by a larger unit to conduct a combat or reconnaissance operation. A patrol may be a fire team, squad, platoon, or company.

6-16. INVOLVEMENT

The CO may be involved in patrolling in one of three ways. He may lead a company–size patrol, provide small patrols from his company (as directed by battalion), or send out patrols to support his company's operation. The company routinely conducts patrols as part of the company/battalion R&S plans. FM 7-8 discusses squad and platoon patrols.

a. When preparing for a company–size patrol, the CO is given a mission by the battalion commander. He obtains enemy information from the S2, conducts troop–leading procedures and coordinates and develops a plan.

b. When providing a patrol for a battalion mission, the CO ensures the unit is prepared and properly organized and equipped for the mission. He assists the leader with preparations, coordinations, and final inspections before they depart.

c. When the CO plans to use a patrol to support a company operation, he decides on its mission, organization, time(s) and places(s) for departure and return, and (possibly) routes. Or he may just assign a mission and allow the platoon leader to plan the patrol. He also assists in planning fire support, logistic support, and communications.

d. The planned action at the objective determines the type of the patrol.

(1) A reconnaissance (area or zone) patrol collects information or confirms or disproves the accuracy of information previously gained.

(2) A combat (ambush, raid, or security) patrol provides security and harasses, destroys, or captures enemy troops, equipment, and installations. A combat patrol also collects and reports information, whether related to its mission or not.

(3) Regardless of the type of the patrol, there are several key principles to successful patrolling. These are detailed planning, thorough reconnaissance, positive control, and all–round security.

6-17. ORGANIZATION

The CO decides what elements and teams are needed for his mission, selects men or units for these elements and teams, and decides what weapons and equipment are needed. He should, however, use his unit's normal organization (squads and platoons) and chain of command (squad and platoon leaders) as much as possible to meet these needs. For example, a combat patrol may be organized as such: the company headquarters is the patrol headquarters; the lst platoon is the assault element; the 2d platoon is the security element; and the 3d platoon and weapons platoon make up the support element. When task–organizing a company patrol, only the required number of personnel should participate. For example, if the security element only requires three security teams, the CO should task the platoon for a security element HQ and three fire teams.

a. A patrol generally consists of a patrol headquarters and the elements needed for the mission.

(1) *Headquarters*. The headquarters of a company-size patrol may consist of the same number of men as a regular company headquarters. However, regardless of a patrol's size, the CO tailors the headquarters to meet mission needs. The patrol headquarters has the same responsibilities as any other command element.

(2) *Elements.* In an area reconnaissance (Figure 6-11), a patrol has a reconnaissance element and a security element. In a zone reconnaissance, a patrol has several reconnaissance elements (Figure 6-12). Each one provides its own security. A combat patrol normally has an assault element, a security element, and a support element (Figure 6-13). At times, the support element may be omitted by combining it with the assault element or a reserve element may be required.

b. Each element of a patrol may be further organized into the teams needed to perform various tasks (Figure 6-14).

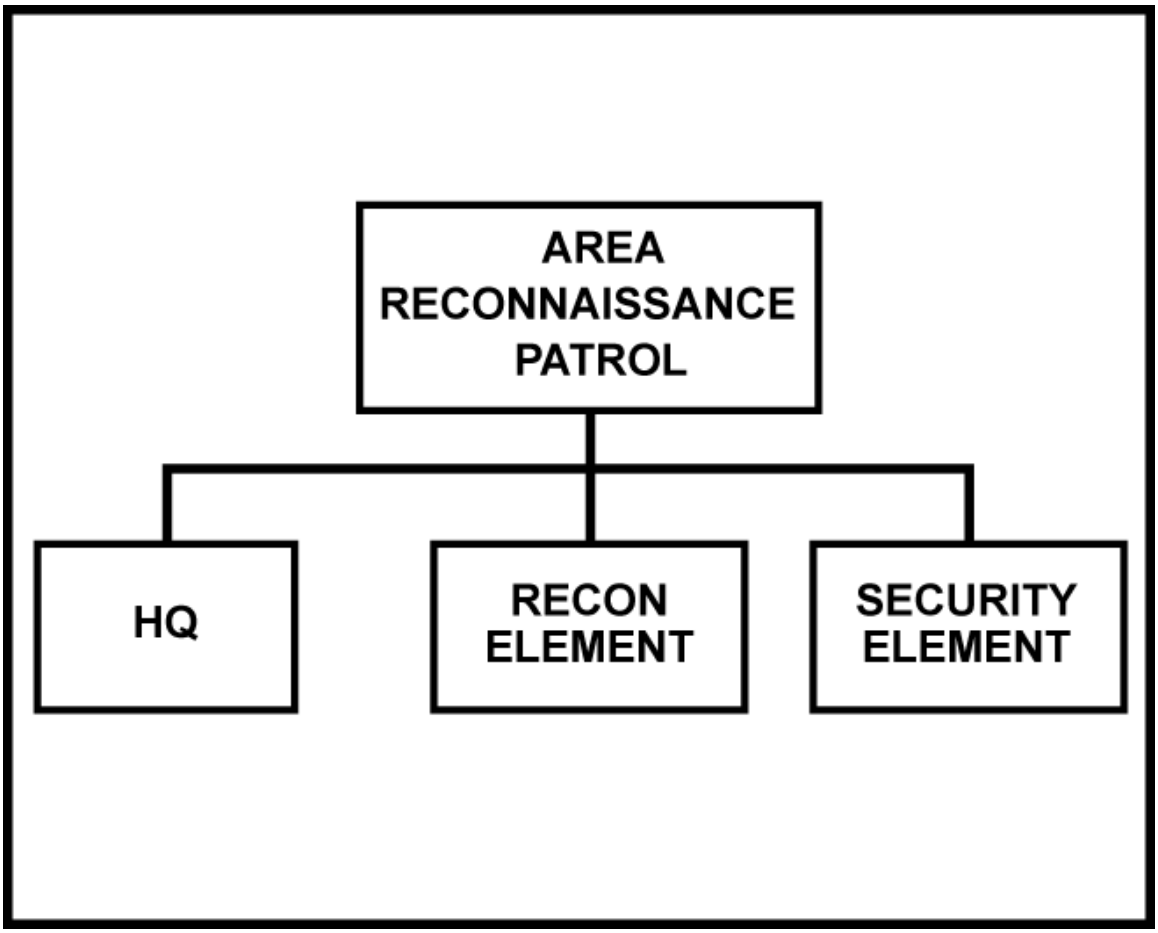

Figure 6-11. Area reconnaissance patrol.

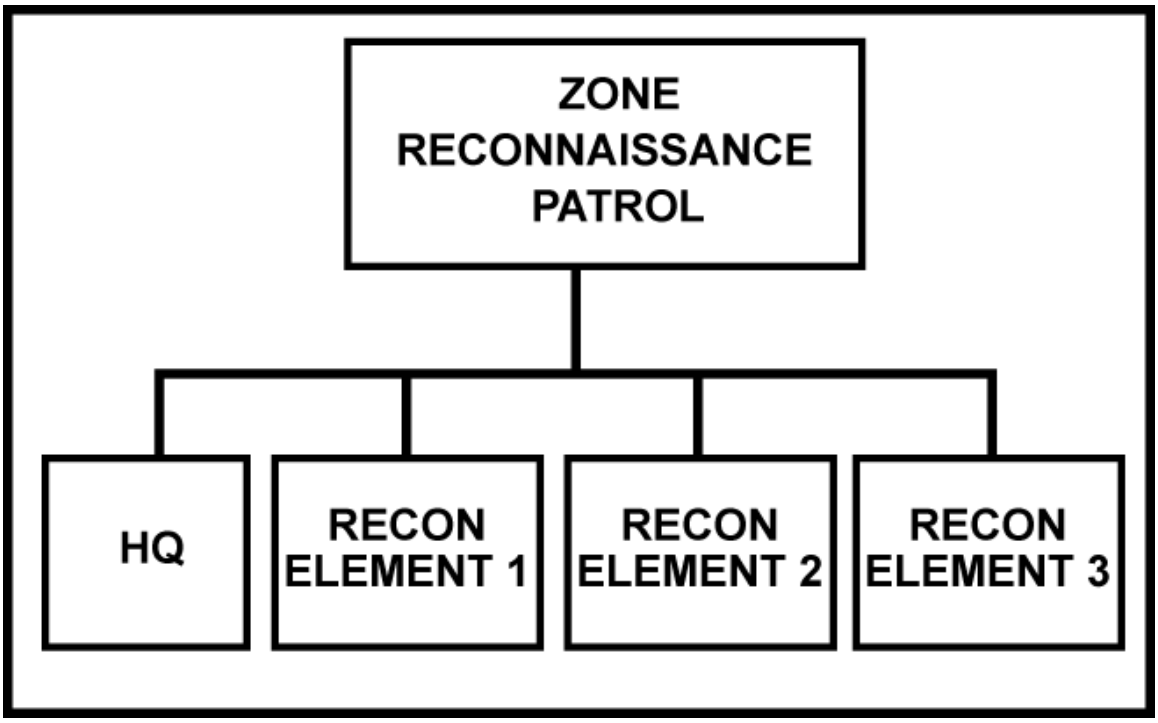

Figure 6-12. Zone reconnaissance patrol.

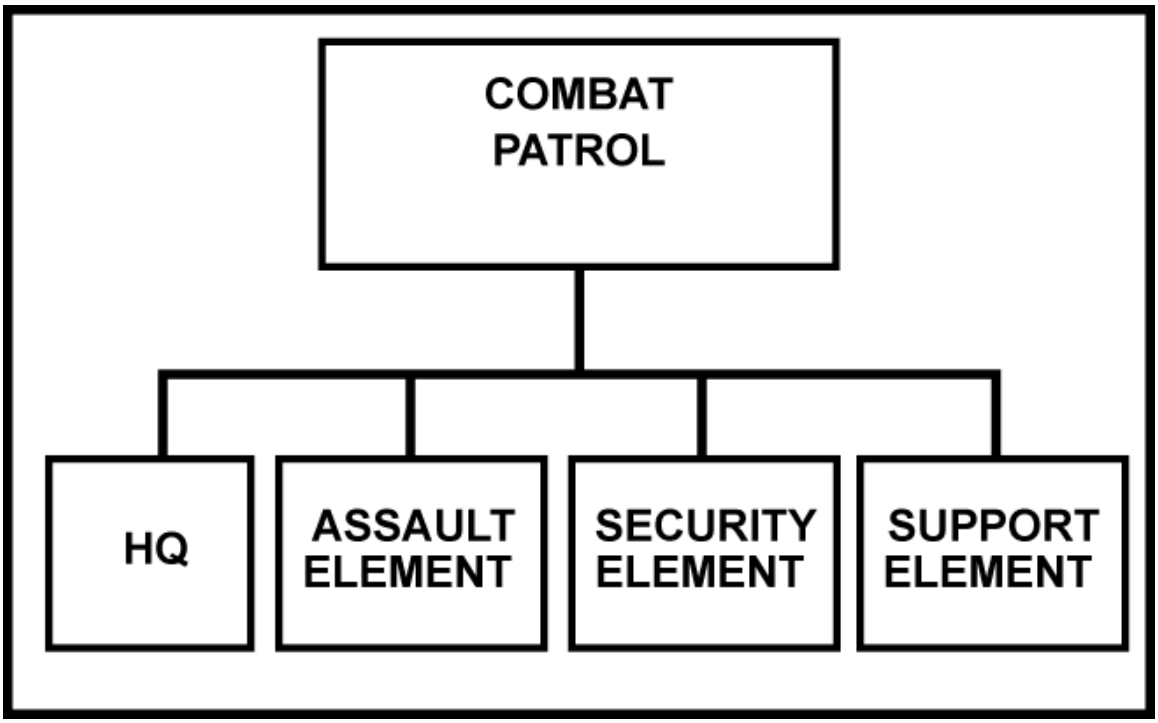

Figure 6-13. Combat patrol.

(1) Reconnaissance patrol elements are organized into several reconnaissance teams in an area reconnaissance, or into R&S teams in a zone reconnaissance. R&S teams provide their own security while reconnoitering. Security elements are organized into the number of security teams needed to secure the objective area.

(2) Combat patrol elements are also organized into the teams needed for various tasks (assault, security, support, and special purpose).

(a) Two or more assault teams are organized when all of the assault element cannot be directly controlled by the assault element leader. This may be the case when the objective is to be assaulted from more than one location.

(b) Security teams are organized as needed to secure and or isolate the objective area.

(c) Two or more support teams are organized when all of the weapons of the support element cannot be directly controlled by the support element leader. This may be the case when there are many supporting weapons, or they are too far apart for direct control by the element leader.

(d) Special purpose teams may also be organized for missions involving the use of scout dogs, demolitions, litters for wounded, and EPW handling.

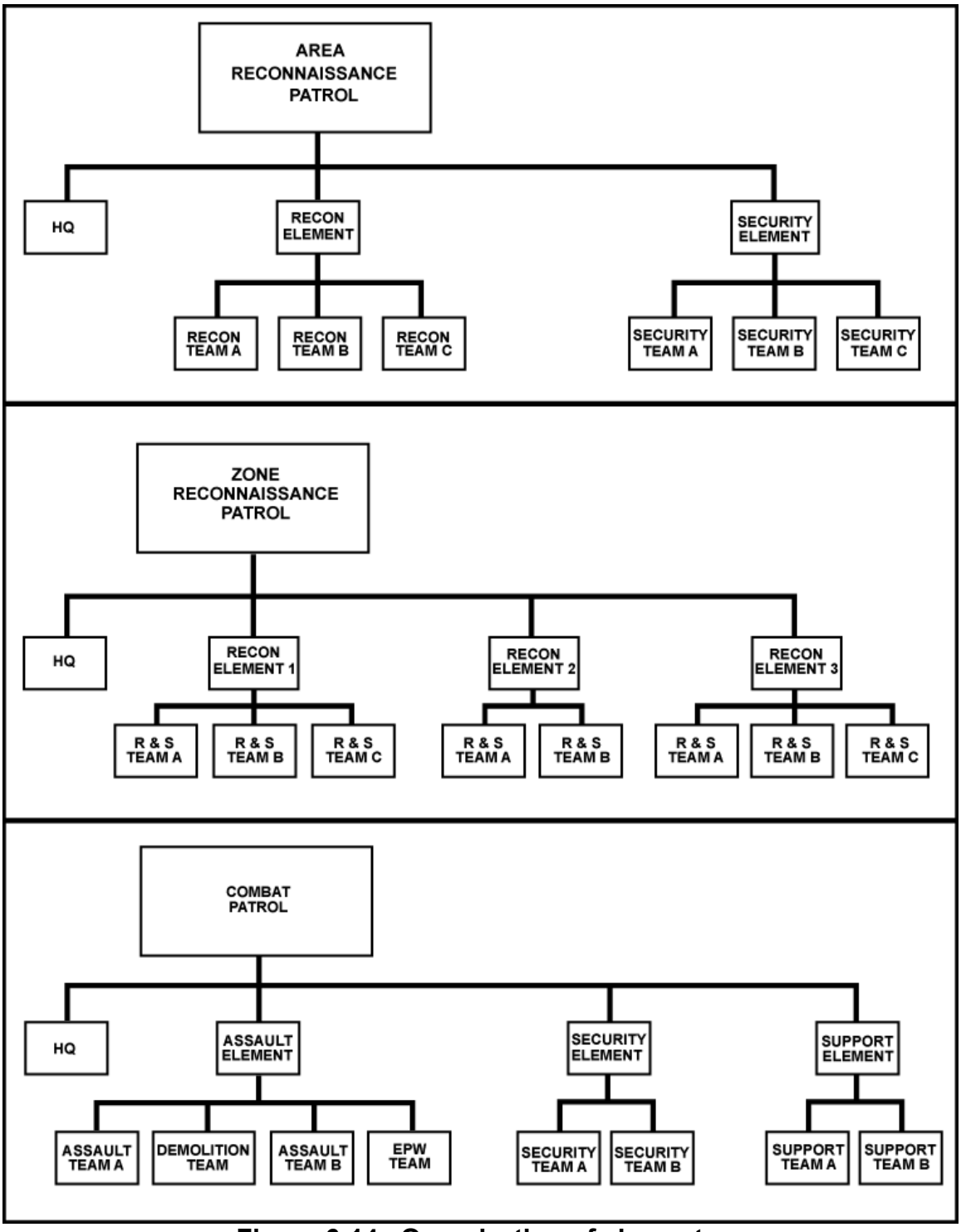

Figure 6-14. Organization of elements.

6-18. RAID

A raid is a surprise attack against a position or installation for a specific purpose other than seizing the terrain. It is conducted to destroy a position or installation, to destroy or capture enemy soldiers or equipment, or to free friendly prisoners.

a. **Key Characteristics**. Surprise, firepower, and violence are the key characteristics for a successful raid. Surprise is best achieved by attacking when the enemy least expects an attack, when visibility is poor, and from an unexpected direction. Firepower is concentrated at critical points to suppress and kill the enemy. Violence is best achieved by gaining surprise, by using massed fire, and by attacking aggressively.

b. **Planning Considerations**. Although the planning process discussed in Chapter 4 for the attack applies for a raid, there are some differences. Because a raid is normally conducted in enemy controlled territory and often conducted against an enemy of equal or greater strength, the plan must ensure the unit is not detected prior to initiating the assault. An extraction or withdrawal plan must also be developed and coordinated to ensure the unit's survival after successfully accomplishing the actions on the objective. There may also be greater complexity involved with the fire support plan, depending on the depth of the raid. This may include a greater reliance on artillery, CAS, AC–130 gunships, and attack helicopters than usual. Finally, a raid often requires more detailed intelligence of the objective area. This may be provided by higher units, or the company may be required to develop this information through reconnaissance.

c. **Actions on the Objective**. The objective of the raid is normally a valuable asset that the enemy is prepared to defend. Often, the enemy will have additional forces in position to react against any threat to this asset. It is essential that the assault element conduct a rapid and precise assault into and through the objective. It must spend the least amount of time possible on the objective. The task organization of this element should consist of only those personnel and teams that are essential to complete the assigned mission. This is particularly important during limited visibility to reduce confusion and friendly casualties. The assault must be thoroughly rehearsed to ensure precise execution.

d. **Preparations**. To achieve the surprise, violence, and speed of execution required, the unit's preparation is crucial to the success of the operation. The following requirements are key to the success of a raid mission.

(1) *Maximum use of intelligence information*. The gathering and disseminating of information must be continuous, and it must be provided to the raid force even while en route to the target area. To ensure mission accomplishment, the unit must be kept informed of the latest enemy developments in the objective area to prevent being surprised.

(2) *Plan development*. The reverse planning sequence and the planning process discussed in Chapter 2 will assist in conducting the detailed planning required for a raid. The plan must address the following phases:

- PHASE l. The unit is inserted or it infiltrates into the objective area.
- PHASE 2. The objective area is then sealed off from outside support or reinforcement, to include the enemy air threat.
- PHASE 3. Any enemy force at or near the objective is overcome by surprise and violent attack, using all available firepower for shock effect.
- PHASE 4. The mission is accomplished quickly before any surviving enemy can recover or be reinforced.
- PHASE 5. The unit quickly withdraws from the objective area and is extracted, or it infiltrates to link up with friendly units or to conduct a new mission.

(3) *Coordination*. Coordination is normally conducted through the battalion headquarters. At times, the company may coordinate directly with adjacent, supporting, or host nation/allied forces.

(4) *Rehearsals*. Rehearsals validate all aspects of planning for the raid and ensure precision in execution. They allow changes to be made in the plan before it is carried out. Ful–scale rehearsals should be conducted under the most realistic conditions possible.

e. **Favorable Conditions**. A successful raid is ensured by—

(1) Launching the raid at an unexpected time or place by taking advantage of darkness and limited visibility and moving over terrain that the enemy may consider impassable.

(2) Avoiding detection through proper movement techniques and skillful camouflage and concealment to include taking advantage of natural cover of the terrain.

(3) Timing the operation as close as possible.

(4) Using all available support, both organic and nonorganic, to include use of special weapons, such as Air Force smart bombs and artillery cannon–launched guided projectiles, with the unit using laser target designators.

(5) Performing quick, violent, precise, and audacious actions that focus full combat power at the decisive time and place.

(6) Disengaging quickly upon mission completion.

(7) Withdrawing swiftly using planned routes and including a deception plan.

f. **Functions**. Four functions are normally performed by the unit when conducting a raid. Each subelement is organized and equipped to do a specific part of the overall mission. Depending upon the specific mission, nature of the target, enemy situation, and terrain, the functions are as follows:

(1) The command group controls movement to and actions at the objective. This unit normally consists of the company commander, other subordinate leaders, and communications to support these leaders.

(2) The security element, whose organization is determined by the mission of the raid force, size and type of the enemy force and its mobility and state of alert, terrain and avenues of approach into the area, and the time needed to seal off the objective area. The security element may—

- Secure the ORP.
- Give early warning of enemy approach.
- Block avenues of approach into the objective areas.
- Prevent enemy escape from the objective.
- Provide overwatch for the units at the objective and suppressive fires for their withdrawal.
- Provide short-range air defense.

(3) The support element provides the heavy volume of fire needed to neutralize the objective. Because fires from this unit are violent and devastating, they must be closely controlled to ensure the precision needed. On order or as planned, fires are lifted and shifted to cover the maneuver of the assault element by suppressing enemy fire from the objective or aerial fires. The support element may also be given specific locations to cover by fire in support of the security element if an enemy quick–reaction force moves toward the objective area. These may include routes into and out of the objective site, key terrain features, or installations adjacent to the main objective. Once the assault has been

completed, or on order from the raid force commander, the support element displaces to the next planned position. Organization of the support element is determined by the following:

(a) Size of the objective, the geography of surrounding area, and the enemy threat (to include air) in the area. This element should be able to neutralize the objective (when supported by air or naval gunfire) and to lift or shift fires either when the assault is launched or when ordered to by the raid force commander.

(b) Mission of the assault unit.

(c) Suitable firing positions.

(d) Size and nature of the enemy force in the objective area and those enemy forces capable of reinforcement at the objective.

(e) Fire support from other units (air strikes, NGF, surface–to–surface missiles, and artillery fire).

(4) The assault element seizes and secures the objective and protects demolition teams, search teams, prisoner–of–war teams, and other teams.

(a) The organization of the assault element is always tailored to the mission. Each objective must be examined carefully. The element's mission is to overcome resistance and secure the objective and to destroy the installation or equipment. Other specialized teams may also be needed. For example, sniper teams could be needed to remove key sentries. To capture prisoners, liberate personnel, and seize or destroy equipment, the assault element could be organized into assault teams, prisoner teams, search teams, medical teams, demolition teams, or breach teams.

(b) To destroy a point target or installation in a heavily defended area where the USAF cannot get close enough to be effective, the assault element might be organized with one small team equipped with laser target designators. From covered and concealed positions, members of this team could then provide guidance for USAF delivery of laser–guided munitions from a safe distance.

g. **Site Selection**. The site chosen for the raid LZ or DZ must support the planned actions at the objective. There are two options when choosing sites.

(1) The unit can land on or near the objective and seize it before the enemy can react. This avoids forced marches over land carrying heavy combat loads. If there is no suitable landing area near the objective, or the enemy has a strong reaction force nearby, this option is not favored.

(2) The unit can land unseen far from the objective. It then assembles, reorganizes, and moves into an ORP near the objective. The objective is seized after security and support elements are in place. This option makes coordinated action easier by setting up control of small units before engaging the enemy.

h. **Conduct of a Raid**. The unit moves to the ORP. The ORP is secured, the leaders' reconnaissance is conducted, and the plan is confirmed. Elements and teams then move to their positions.

(1) The teams of the security element move to positions (Figure 6-15) where they can secure the ORP, warn of enemy approach, and block avenues of approach into the objective area. They also situate themselves where they can prevent enemy escape from the objective area and perform any combination of these tasks within their capability.

(2) As the assault element and support element move into position, the security element keeps the leader informed of all enemy action. It fires only if detected, or on the leader's order.

(3) Once the assault starts, the security element prevents enemy entry into, or escape from, the objective area.

(4) When the assault is over, the security element covers the withdrawal of the unit to the ORP. It withdraws on order or on a planned signal.

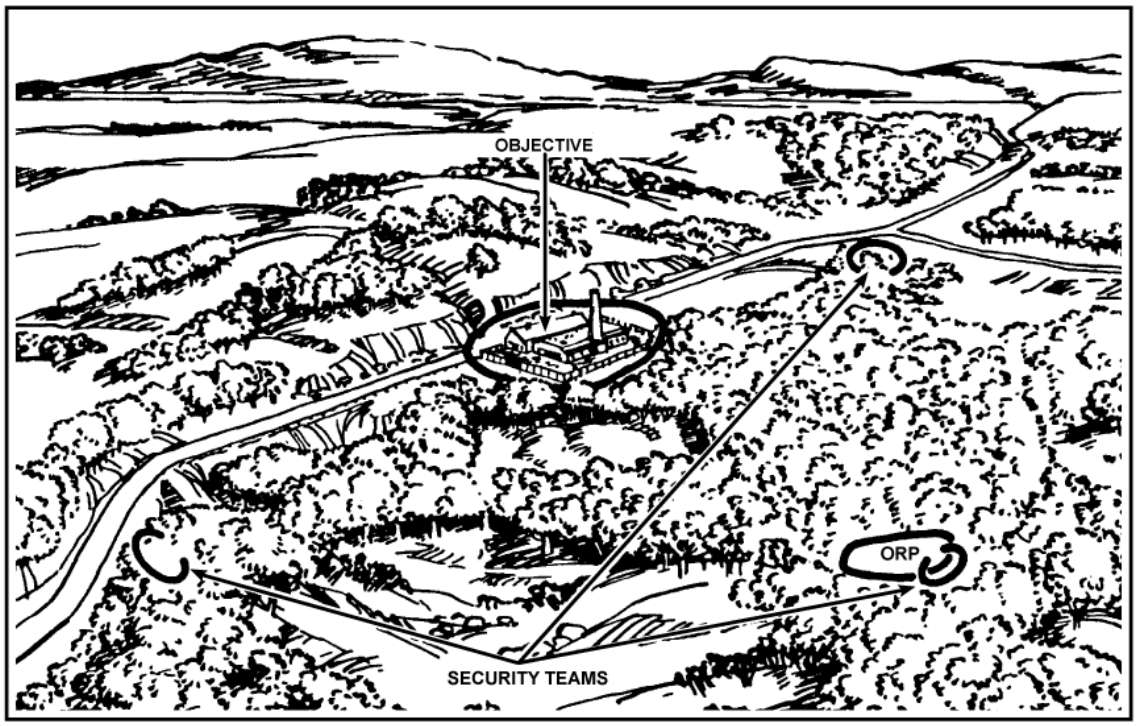

Figure 6-15. Security elements move into position.

(5) The support element moves into position before the assault element (Figure 6-16). From its position, it suppresses the objective and shifts its fire when the assault starts. It normally covers the withdrawal of the assault element from the immediate area of the objective. It withdraws on order or on signal.

(6) The assault element deploys close enough to the objective to permit immediate assault if detected by the enemy. As supporting fire is lifted or shifted, the assault element attacks and secures the objective. It protects demolition teams, search teams, and other special teams while they work. On order, the assault element withdraws to the ORP. The assault element should be as small as possible and conduct thorough rehearsals to avoid confusion on the objective.

(7) At the ORP, the patrol unit assembles and moves a safe distance away to reorganize and disseminate information. They then return to friendly lines or continue the mission.

6-19. AMBUSH

An ambush is a surprise attack from a concealed position on a moving or temporarily halted target. It may include an assault to close with and destroy the target, or the attack

may be by fire only. It does not require that ground be seized and held. The company plans, prepares, and conducts ambush patrols the same as a platoon (FM 7-8). An ambush is a useful tactic because—

- Small, well–trained, disciplined forces with limited weapons and equipment can destroy much larger enemy forces.
- It reduces the enemy's overall combat effectiveness by destroying and harassing his forces.
- Enemy morale and effectiveness suffer heavily at little cost to the force executing the ambush.

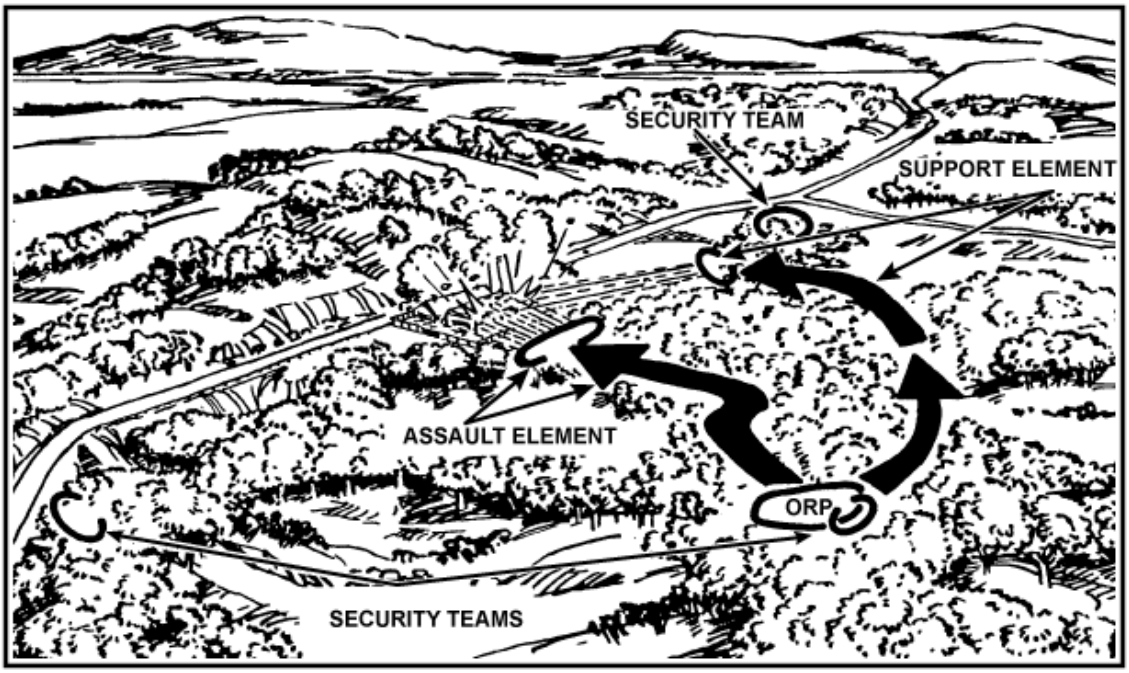

Figure 6-16. Support and assault elements move into position.

a. **Execution.** A successful ambush must be executed with precision, violence, speed, and audacity. For success, ambush operations must emphasize the following:

(1) *Surprise.* Surprise, more than any other single aspect, enhances the value of an ambush. Surprise increases the potential for inflicting damage on the enemy with less risk to the unit.

(2) *Coordinated firepower and shock effect*. Coordinated firepower is used for maximum shock effect.

(a) Massive volumes of accurate fire, explosives, and mines, coupled with an aggressive attack, break the enemy's spirit to fight back. Surprise increases shock effect and the chances for success. Shock effect can cover unexpected defects in an ambush–for example, ambushing a much larger force than expected.

(b) All weapons must be sited with interlocking fires in the kill zone and along likely avenues of entrance or exit. Mortars should be used if the terrain permits. Tripods and traversing and elevating mechanisms are normally used with machine guns to lock in fires. All riflemen use firing stakes to mark left and right limits, and elevation stakes.

There is a tendency to shoot high in an ambush–especially at night. The M203 grenade launchers are sited to cover the dead space and routes of escape.

(3) *Control.* Control is essential; leaders must have contact with all members of their unit to alert them to the oncoming enemy.

(a) Leaders should not move around the ambush site during this crucial period. A method used to alert members can be to tie strings or vines to soldiers' legs or arms. By a series of light tugs, all members of the ambush can be alerted to enemy presence.

(b) The leader must initiate the ambush with a casualty-producing device. A bank of Claymore mines on a double-ring main is an excellent device to spring an ambush. Other good techniques are to use a 90-mm recoilless rifle firing antipersonnel (APERS) rounds or a machine gun. Whistles or pyrotechnics must not be used. They will give the enemy time to react.

- As soon as the enemy is hit, he reacts. The ambush force has only a few seconds to destroy the enemy before he recovers from the initial shock and leaves the kill zone–either with a direct counterattack or withdrawal. Subsequent fires and other banks of Claymore mines must be planned.
- The leader initiates the ambush except when a member of the ambush knows he has been discovered. He then has the authority to execute–with killing fire, not by yelling.
- The cease–fire must be controlled by the leader. A whistle or other device may be used to get attention and then cease-fire is signalled.

(4) *Security.* The flanks and rear of an ambush site are open to counterattack. Flank and rear security may be enhanced by—

- Echeloning in depth.
- Designating sectors of observation.
- Positioning of RSTA devices.
- Enforcing noise and light discipline.
- Having a good withdrawal plan.
- Securing routes of withdrawal.
- Executing with speed and violence.
- Positioning a security force to seal off the ambush area.
- Having good camouflage.

(5) *Simplicity*. A simple, direct plan improves the chance of success. The ambush plan must be clear yet concise to offer the greatest likelihood of success. For example:

(a) Mission statements for security, support, and assault elements must be clear, concise, and direct.

(b) Tasks to be performed by the ambush elements should be easy to understand.

(c) Contingency plans should be simple.

(d) Routes into positions and withdrawal routes should not cross. They should be the shortest, most secure routes.

(6) *Training and self–discipline*. All advantages must be exploited. Discipline must be strict. There must be no sleeping, talking, eating, or smoking in the ambush site. If an ambush is to be set up for long periods, then the elements of the ambush must be pulled back to the ORP at set times for rest. Extended ambushes of 24, 36, or 48 hours require six- or eight–hour shifts. It may take a company to man an extended platoon ambush

position. Tired troops cannot man an ambush well; they cannot perform vigorous operations all day and be alert on an ambush all night.

b. **Organization.** A unit conducting an ambush must be task–organized to perform the following functions: assault, security, and support. The ambush forces should be task–organized according to the TOE–by platoons, squads, and fire teams. The TOE should not be changed to create smaller elements for an ambush. The TOE formations may be reinforced with machine gun or recoilless rifle teams, or a 60-mm mortar squad.

(1) *Assault.* The elements assigned the assault mission either move directly into their positions or move through a release point. The mission may include any combination of the following actions:

- Conduct the main assault.
- Halt an enemy's motorized column or any moving target.
- Kill or capture personnel.
- Recover supplies and equipment.
- Destroy vehicles and supplies.

Search teams are not always used; the leader must decide how and when to use them. When soldiers leave the security of their well–chosen, concealed ambush position, they are subject to the fires of the enemy who may also be hidden and ready. If it is at night, do not use tripflares or illumination to light the search area as this will also expose the search team to the enemy. Always assume there is hidden enemy–the ambush will not kill them all. Night vision devices or a red–filtered flashlight taped to M16s should be used to make a quick search. However, a white light flashlight is faster if loss of night vision is not critical. If the return fire from the enemy is great or if the ambush missed the main body, then the leader may choose to break contact and leave without searching the kill zone.

(2) *Security*. The elements assigned the mission of security may move to their positions directly or by way of a release point. Their missions may include any or all of the following actions:

- Secure flanks, rear, or ORP.
- Provide early warning.
- Seal off the kill zone to prevent the enemy from escaping or reinforcing.
- Assist in executing the ambush.
- Cover withdrawal of main ambush force.

(3) *Support.* The units assigned a support mission provide fires that may include employment of—

- Heavy automatic weapon fires.
- Antitank fires.
- Mortar fires.
- Mines.
- Flame munitions.

c. **Ambush Site**. When choosing an ambush site, all sources of information must be used to enhance surprise, exploit the enemy's weak points, and take advantage of the terrain. Emphasis is on—

- Natural cover and concealment for the ambush force.

- Routes of entry and withdrawal (at least two) that should be direct and easy to reach.
- Good observation and fields of fire.
- Harmless-looking terrain.
- Few enemy escape routes.
- Limited enemy reinforcement ability.
- Nearby assembly or rendezvous area.
- Terrain that will canalize enemy into kill zones, and natural obstacles to keep him there.

NOTE: Try to select a site covered by friendly supporting indirect fires.

(1) *Take advantage of the terrain*. Emphasis must be on exploiting all natural cover and concealment afforded by the terrain. Site the ambush and individual positions based on the terrain rather than trying to adapt the terrain to a fixed geometric design.

(2) *Restrict enemy movement*. Restricting enemy movement by natural or man–made obstacles should also be planned.

d. **Types of Ambushes**. Ambushes have two basic categories–area ambush and point ambush.

(1) Area ambushes may be set up by platoons, companies, or battalions. They are used to interdict enemy movement in a given area or inflict casualties on his forces. Area ambushes consist of a series of point ambushes. The size and location of the ambushes are dictated by the METT–T analysis.

(a) Companies may conduct area ambushes independently or as part of a battalion area ambush. The company may receive very specific guidance or only an area of operations and a mission statement. The CO may develop a very detailed concept with a central ambush supported by smaller ambushes for security/isolation. Or, the CO may assign platoon areas of operation and allow decentralized execution.

(b) Considerations in selecting point ambush sites as part of a company area ambush include:

- Ensuring fires from one ambush force do not endanger other ambush units
- The enemy's likely course of action both before and after initiating the ambush.
- The withdrawal/ linkup plan after completing the ambush mission.

(c) The CO must establish clear criteria to each ambush site leader on when to initiate fires.

(2) Point ambushes are set at the most ideal location to inflict damage on the enemy. Such ambushes must be able to accept the enemy force from more than one direction. The ambush site should enable the unit to execute an ambush in two or three main directions. The other directions must be covered by security that gives early warning of enemy attack.

(a) Most of the different types of point ambushes are found in FM 7-8.

(b) However, another type is the mechanical ambush. It consists of Claymore mines set in series with a double-ring main. It is command detonated or detonated by a triggering device activated by the enemy. Mechanical ambushes are normally manned. Soldiers prepare to engage the enemy with direct fire if the mechanical ambush does not

detonate or if it is wholly or partially ineffective. Mechanical ambushes are an effective way to interdict a large area using a small force. If the mechanical ambush is effective and our soldiers do not reveal their presence, the enemy is confused. This has a devastating effect on his morale and effectiveness.

e. **Execution of the Ambush**. Stealth and security are important factors; the following are various ways to accomplish these factors:

- Position security teams and early warning detection devices first.
- Use the best route to main ambush position consistent with security.
- Quickly occupy the ambush position and set up communications and signaling devices.
- Position key weapons (automatic and antiarmor).
- Rig Claymore mines, tripflares, and booby traps.
- Ensure that all weapons are correctly positioned. Assign sectors of fire to provide mutual support and cover dead space.

(1) *Camouflage.* During mission preparation, each man camouflages himself and his equipment, and secures his equipment to prevent noise. At the ambush site, prepare positions with minimum change in the natural appearance of the site. Conceal all resulting debris to prevent any evidence of occupation.

(2) *Movement*. Keep movement to a minimum. Closely control the number of men moving at a time. Keep every man as quiet as possible, especially at night. Enforce light discipline rigidly at night and forbid smoking.

(3) *Signals*. Change audible and visual signals, such as whistles or pyrotechnics, often to avoid setting patterns and alerting the enemy. Three or four simple signals are needed to execute the ambush. Signals are used—

(a) To provide early warning of an enemy approach. A signal by the security force to alert the patrol leader to the correct direction of enemy approach may be given. This includes arm–and–hand signals, radio, or field telephone.

(b) To initiate the ambush. This may be the detonation of mines or explosives. Fire is then delivered at once in the heaviest, most accurate volume possible. Properly timed and delivered fires add to the achievement of surprise, as well as to the destruction of the target.

(c) To lift or shift fires if the kill zone is to be assaulted. Voice commands, whistles, or pyrotechnics may be used. When the kill zone is assaulted, the lifting or shifting of fires must be as precise as when starting the ambush. Otherwise, the assault is delayed and the enemy has a chance to recover and react.

(d) To withdraw. The signal for withdrawal can be voice commands, whistles, or pyrotechnics.

(4) *Objective rally point*. Locate the ORP far enough from the ambush site so that it will not be overrun if the enemy manages to attack the ambushers. Leave sustainment loads in the ORP and scout the withdrawal routes to the ORP (when possible by each man). Withdrawal routes should provide cover and concealment for the unit and hinder enemy pursuit; they are a main consideration in the selection of the ambush site. They may be the key to survival after executing the ambush. On signal, the ambush force quickly (but quietly) withdraws to the ORP. If pursued, the withdrawal may be by bounds with mines or hasty ambushes used to delay pursuing forces.

(5) *Ambush variety*. Use more than one ambush method. If one method is used predominantly, the enemy will develop an effective defense against it and will be affected less by the shock of the ambush since he knows what to expect. No single method will fit all combinations of terrain, equipment, weather, and enemy capabilities. Use a variety of signals as well, both audible and visual. Use weapons fire, mines, and RSTA when possible and vary signals to avoid compromise.

(6) *Swift action*. Speed in the execution of the ambush and the withdrawal should prevent enemy reaction forces from engaging the ambush force. Speed is often a shield against casualties and failure. If there is contact with reaction forces, speed may enhance quick disengagement.

f. **Successful Ambush**. Emphasize the following to succeed:

(1) Intelligence. This ensures the enemy is ambushed at a time and place when he least expects or is least prepared to fight.

(2) Detailed planning, thorough training, and rehearsing of all elements in all phases of the ambush. This ensures maximum shock effect through swift, precise execution.

(3) All available RSTA devices. This permits daytime effectiveness at night when moving, shooting, or detecting enemy movement. To avoid detection, active RSTA devices should not be used until after the ambush has been triggered.

(4) All available firepower with emphasis on antiarmor, area and automatic weapons, and precision-guided munitions.

(5) Speed. This helps to achieve surprise and enhance security of the force.

(6) Cover, concealment, and overall protection afforded by the terrain when moving or when occupying ambush positions.

6-20. PATROL BASE

A patrol base is a position set up when the patrol unit halts for an extended period. When the unit must halt for a long time in a place not protected by friendly troops, it takes active and passive security measures. The time the patrol base may be occupied depends on the need for secrecy. It should be occupied only as long as necessary, but not for more than 24 hours–except in an emergency. The unit should not use the same patrol base more than once. The company selects and occupies a patrol base for the same reasons and in the same manner as the platoon (FM 7-8). The considerations for a perimeter defense (Chapter 5) also apply for establishing a company patrol base.

Section VII. STAY–BEHIND OPERATIONS

Stay–behind operations can be used as a part of defense or delay missions. In the defense, the enemy can bypass a friendly force. This offers the opportunity to attack the enemy's weakest point, thus delaying him.

6-21. PURPOSE

The unit that stays behind can inflict casualties on the enemy throughout the depth of his formations. They can disrupt the enemy's offensive cohesion by attacking key command, control, communications, CS, or CSS elements; and by blocking communications and supply lines. Their presence can detract the enemy's main effort by forcing him to allocate combat forces for rear area operations. Members of the stay–behind forces can

furnish HUMINT on enemy forces in its area and call for and adjust indirect fires and air fires.

6-22. TYPES

There are two types of stay-behind operations.

a. **Unplanned**. An unplanned stay–behind operation is one in which a unit finds itself cut off from other friendly elements for an indefinite time without specific planning or targets.

b. **Deliberate**. A deliberate stay-behind operation is one in which a unit plans to operate in an enemy–controlled area as a separate and cohesive element for a certain time or until a specified event occurs. This requires extensive planning for the establishment, operation, and linkup phases.

(1) *Establishment phase*. In this phase, combat, CS, and CSS units and their required logistics are positioned in the desired area of operations. Unnecessary vehicles and equipment are evacuated. This phase can be either overt or covert.

(a) If overt, the unit continues to fight from its present defensive positions while the enemy advances and other friendly forces withdraw. This technique is viable only if the stay–behind unit has massive firepower and the ability to control or retain key or decisive terrain from its defensive position.

NOTE: This technique is least desirable since the enemy will use his knowledge of friendly positions to suppress, isolate, and overrun them.

(b) If covert, the unit moves its elements into position using clandestine techniques to avoid detection. The unit allows the enemy to bypass it without making contact with him until the unit is ready to start attacking vulnerable targets.

(2) *Operation phase.* This phase begins once the stay–behind units are positioned and other friendly forces have withdrawn. During this phase, units conduct combat operations to support their mission and the commander's intent. The combat operations often include reconnaissance, raids, and ambushes against targets of opportunity. If commanders wish to exercise greater control, they can set a priority of targets by type or assign tasks according to avenues of approach.

(3) *Linkup phase*. This phase includes any plans to link up with friendly forces and end the stay–behind operation. It does not include linkups between stay–behind units to conduct missions during the operation phase. The linkup can be done after reconsolidation, but involves small units infiltrating into friendly units.

NOTE: The stay–behind unit can either wait in place until friendly forces counterattack to their location, or it can move through the enemy to friendly positions.

6-23. PLANNING

The troop–leading procedures apply to stay–behind operations. Planners must pay strict attention to the following:

a. **Task Organization**. The stay-behind unit includes only the soldiers and equipment needed for the mission. It can provide its own security, can hide easily, and can move through restrictive terrain.

NOTE: Depending on METT–T, small units can be augmented as needed with CS or CSS. Who makes this decision depends on the level of operation; the goal is for each element to be as self-sufficient as possible.

b. **Reconnaissance.** This is always important–in a stay–behind operation, it is even more so. Reporting tasks/information requirements can include suitable sites for patrol bases, OPs, caches, water sources, dismounted and mounted avenues of approach, kill zones, engagement areas, and covered and concealed approach routes.

c. **Combat Service Support**. Because the stay-behind unit will not be in physical contact with its supporting unit, rations, ammunition, radio batteries, water, and medical supplies are cached. Provisions for casualty and EPW evacuation depend on the company and battalion plans.

d. **Deception Plan**. Most stay–behind operations are set up covertly. It is essential to mislead the enemy during this effort to cause him to act in a manner favorable to the unit's plan of action. Deception can continue throughout the mission.

e. **Concept of the Operation**. In most cases, units operate in small groups in their own area of operation. The actual concept, however, depends on the commander's intent.

6-24. BREAKOUT FROM ENCIRCLEMENT

A breakout from encirclement may be necessary when a stay–behind force is detected and encircled by the enemy or from other situations that result in the encirclement of the company.

a. **General Considerations**. The specific situation at the time of the encirclement will determine the proper actions to be taken by the encircled force. If the company is still combat effective and in a position to continue the mission according to the higher commander's concept, a breakout may not even be considered. If a breakout is required or directed by higher headquarters, the senior officer within the encirclement assumes control of all encircled forces. He then decides whether to conduct a breakout attack or to conduct an exfiltration to prevent the capture/destruction of the force. Whichever technique is selected should be conducted during limited visibility and as soon as possible to prevent the enemy from establishing his positions and concentrating additional forces against the encircled force.

b. **Breakout Attack**. A breakout attack is planned as any other attack with the following special considerations. The friendly force is normally in a defensive posture and the consolidation of this defense is the first requirement. This is accomplished as a perimeter defense as described in Chapter 5. Once the force is secured, the CO directs reconnaissance to identify enemy weaknesses or gaps that can be exploited by the attack. Then he plans the attack and integrates all available fire support to include assets outside the encirclement if possible. The plan may incorporate a feint to deceive the enemy of the true location for the main attack. This may be difficult unless there are considerable friendly forces available. The plan must carefully consider the timings required to disengage units from their positions on the perimeter to follow the main attack. If they move too soon and are detected by the enemy, the breakout may fail because of the premature collapse of the perimeter defense. Contingency plans to switch to a decentralized exfiltration by the remaining forces may be effective in this case.

c. **Breakout by Exfiltration**. The initial actions are identical to the breakout attack. Once the reconnaissance has identified enemy gaps and weaknesses, the CO decides how to exploit them. He must also decide what size elements will conduct the exfiltration. If appropriate, a technique similar to the withdrawal not under enemy pressure may be used. This entails thinning the units on the perimeter, leaving a DLIC for each platoon to deceive the enemy, and providing a security force in the event the enemy attacks. At a given time or on order, these DLICs would then disengage and begin exfiltration on their designated lanes. The CO must also decide how many lanes to use and whether or not to plan for linkups before reentering friendly lines.